Opposition offered 'juicy' posts in Senate

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 2, 2001 ★ 36 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 235 ₱15

World champ fights new chess computer

LONDON—Four years after chess champion Gary Kasparov's loss to a supercomputer shook the chess world, man is getting a rematch.

The latest installment of Man vs. Machine pits a different computer against a different chess champion, but the stakes will still be high in October when Vladimir Kramnik faces the world's top chess program, Deep Fritz, in Manama, Bahrain. Perhaps higher.

WORLD/ A14

4 eyed as SSS chief

Palace short list: Colayco, De la Paz, Orbos, Alunan

By Clarissa S. Batino, Blanche S. Rivera, Andrea T. Echavez and PDI Bureaus

THE HEADS of government financial institutions will be reshuffled today in the course of replacing Social Security System president and chief executive officer Vitaliano Nañagas II, according to a highly placed source in Malacañang.

Corazon de la Paz, former head of the global accounting firm Price Waterhouse Coopers, is reportedly among those being considered to replace Nañagas, who is under fire for his supposed "poor management style."

TV host and ex-Pangasinan Gov. Oscar Orbos, former Clark Development Corp. president Rufo Colayco and Maynilad Water Corp. president Rafael Alunan were earlier named as possible replacements.

But the source said the names of the three men were not on the list of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, who was supposed to have made an announcement on the issue late last night but called it off at the last minute.

"The solution I have found involves many steps, and I am still consulting with the people involved. I would have something more firm to announce (today)," Camacho said.

Operations were paralyzed yesterday at the SSS central office in Quezon City and branches nationwide as members of the Alert and Concerned Employees for a Better SSS (Access) continued their walkout and managers ordered a shutdown of operations. *(See related story below.)*

Asked about the replacement of Nañagas,

4 EYED/ A13

How about rights of 23M SSS members?

By Andrea Trinidad-Echavez

SSS MEMBER Dan Falcon, 48, endured a two-hour trip from Laguna to claim his medical reimbursement, and was annoyed at being greeted by the protest scene.

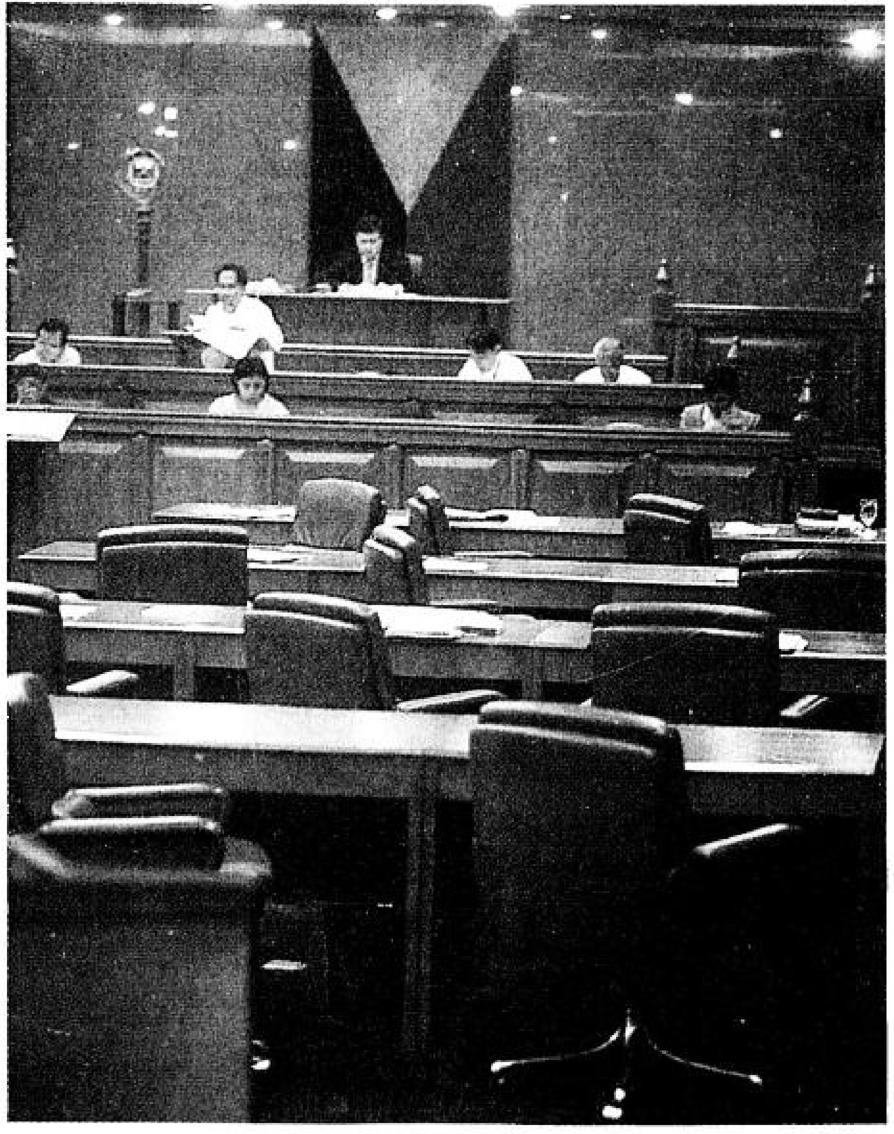
"Airing their grievances is understandable for as long as they do it during their break or after office hours, but not when their actions affect the public," said Falcon, who had just recovered from a bout with high blood pressure.

"It's normal to fight for your rights, but you should look beyond yourselves and consider the rights of the greater majority," he said.

Will the future of the Social Security System members get better when the demand of its protesting employees is met? Or will the members

HOW/ A13

OPPOSITION senators (above) hopefully look over what's left of committee chairmanships. Front row, from left, Rodolfo Biazon, Loi Ejercito, Edgardo Angara, Tessie Aquino-Oreta; back row, Robert Jaworski, Serge Osmeña, Tito Sotto, Panfilo Lacson and Gregorio Honasan. And (below) they walk out en masse on seeing they are left with the scraps. *(Story on Page A2)* JESS YUSON



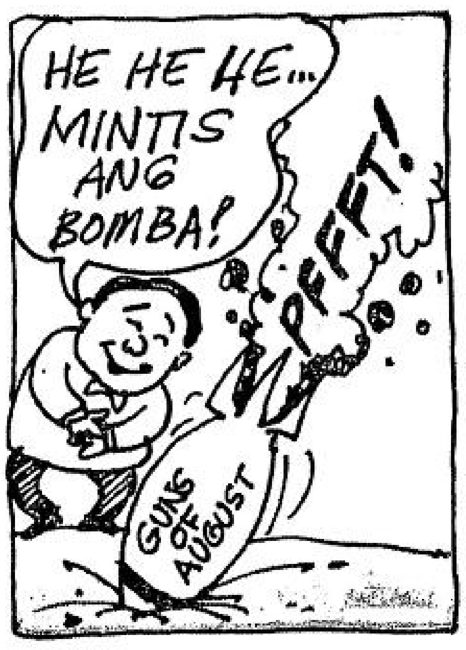
From 'Guns of August' to 'Gums of…'

By Armand N. Nocum

"GUMS of August" and not "Guns of August" was what became of the opposition's threat to "mobilize its heavy artillery to pound the excesses and abuses of the Macapagal-Arroyo administration," according to administration Sen. Ralph Recto.

Sen. Renato Cayetano yesterday said that the opposition's plan to use the alleged bribery scandal involving the husband of President Macapagal-Arroyo against the

FROM/ A14


HE HE HE... MINTIS ANG BOMBA!
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GUNS OF AUGUST

Opposition suspends Bing probe; GMA happy

By Martin P. Marfil, Armand N. Nocum and Cathy C. Yamsuan

ON THE eve of her beleaguered husband's return from California, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday was "happy" and "grateful" that former correspondence secretary Veronica "Bing" Rodrigo clarified on Tuesday that her information that Mike Arroyo had accepted a large bribe was hearsay.

Opposition senators decided to shelve their plan to hold a public inquiry into the influence-peddling allegations, even though the Ombudsman still plans to question Rodrigo about what she might know about two controversial telecommunications franchises granted by Congress but vetoed by the President.

"Apparently," Senate Minority Floor Leader Aquilino Pimentel said, "Ms Rodrigo can no longer be relied upon as the primary witness to lay the basis for an in-depth investigation by the Senate."

Asked if the opposition bloc would drop its proposal to seek a Senate probe, Pimentel said: "For the moment, because there's nothing to go on."

Ms Macapagal described the former Palace aide and daughter of the late Sen. Francisco "Soc" Rodrigo as an "old friend" and thanked her for a statement issued Tuesday night, when Rodrigo said she had "only learned" from an undisclosed source that Arroyo had

OPPOSITION/ A13

Telecom giants, Congress spar over franchises

By Blanche Rivera and Rocky Nazareno

IT WASN'T exactly a clash of the titans, but Congress and telecommunication giants yesterday locked horns over whether the grants of controversial franchises to two companies linked with a bribery scandal were aboveboard and transparent.

Globe Telecom and Smart Communications Inc., two of the biggest players in the industry, lambasted the Senate and the House of Representatives for allegedly failing in their duty to inform concerned parties about the bills granting franchises to firms to set up a clearinghouse and a new nationwide

TELECOM/ A13

Lawyers warn buyer of Forbes Park lot owned by 'Jose Velarde'

By Cathy Yamsuan

PRIVATE lawyers in the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada have warned a prospective buyer of a piece of property in Forbes Park that it is being claimed by the "People of the Philippines."

The lawyers told Ricky Delgado of No. 520 Buendia St., North Forbes Park that the property being sold to him was earlier acquired using funds from the controversial Jose Velarde account in Equitable PCI Bank.

In a one-page letter to Delgado, the lawyers led by Arno Sanidad said "a property known as No. 518 Buendia St., North Forbes Park, Makati City . . . was acquired from Bank of Commerce/Nepomuceno Productions with the use of funds from the account of Jose Velarde a.k.a. Joseph Estrada in Equitable PCI Bank."

"This serves as a formal notice to you of the claim of the People of the Philippines over the property," the letter said.

Had Estrada's impeachment trial continued, prosecutors said they would have established how the Jose Velarde account was used by Estrada to purchase mansions for his family and mistresses.

Earlier reports said the North Forbes Park property was Estrada's wedding gift to his daughter Jackie when she married Beaver Lopez in September 1999.

The 3,000-square meter property was valued at P135 million, according to the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ).

The PCIJ said Estrada's intermediaries passed off the property as a gift to the Lopez couple to evade payment of P9 million in capital gains tax and documentary stamp. The group said the tax evasion was made possible by using fake documents.

LAWYERS/ A14

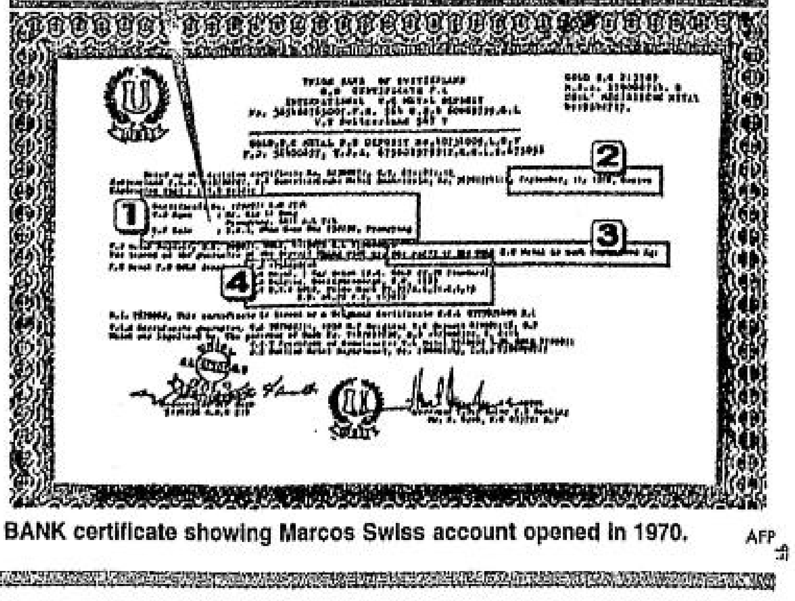
Marcos used Kim Il-sung to hide gold?

SEOUL—The late dictator Ferdinand Marcos allegedly deposited 940 tons of gold bars worth $8 billion in 1970 in a Swiss bank, under the name of the late North Korean leader Kim Il-sung, a report in a South Korean newspaper said yesterday.

It is the first time that such an allegation has cropped up in the convoluted saga of the Marcoses' fabled hidden wealth, reports of which have tantalized Filipinos for years.

Seoul's Munhwa Ilbo newspaper quoted an unnamed former Marcos aide as saying that the se-

MARCOS/ A14



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V.S Name : Mr. Kim Il Sung
Pyongyang, 2411 A.L 714
C.F Code : I.N.A, Cham Kwan Chi 798790.

BANK certificate showing Marcos Swiss account opened in 1970. AFP

PAG-IISIPAN MUNA

Second FRONT PAGE

SENATE COMMITTEES

Opposition offered 'juicy' posts

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

THE SENATE majority coalition has offered the minority the chairmanship of 10 committees, but the latter decided to "sleep on" the offer until next week.

Included in the offer were such "substantial" committees as constitutional amendments and economic affairs.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said some minority members even wanted to "outrightly reject" the offer, but did not say what their reasons were.

"We went over the list and tried to find out who would want to take over the committees but the consensus was to defer accepting the offer and to sleep (on) it," Pimentel said after a minority caucus.

He said the minority senators wanted to find out what other committees were on offer, if any.

"It's possible they will string us along," Pimentel said in Filipino.

Reacting to the minority's decision, Senate President Franklin Drilon said the majority can wait but only up to a point.

"We'll be patient, but at a certain point we have to start working and we cannot start working until the committees have been reorganized," Drilon said.

He said there was no rush to reorganize the committees at this time as the senators were still in the process of referring the bills that have been filed to the appropriate committees.

In a news conference earlier yesterday, Drilon said that the offer was made "in the spirit of good working relations" and that there were "no strings attached."

To comments that what was being offered to the minority were "crumbs," Drilon said: "I don't think foreign relations is a crumb... In the first place, every Senate committee is important."

The 10 committees offered for chairmanship to the minority were: agrarian reform; civil service and government reorganization; constitutional amendments; cooperatives; economic affairs; electoral reforms; foreign relations; peace, unification and reconciliation; public information and mass media; and youth, women and family relations.

Sen. Joker Arroyo pointed out that the committee chairmanships being offered were "very substantial" and covered some of the issues the minority have complained about.

For instance, they complained that President Macapagal-Arroyo had no sound economic program in the State-of-the-Nation Address she gave last month, so they were being given the committee on economic affairs, he said.

"Everything they complained about was given to them," Arroyo said.

SEX SCANDAL

Solon denies 'burlesk' tales

BY ROCKY NAZARENO

"AS God is my witness, I assure you the burlesk king episode was not true."

A movie actor's denial? Hardly.

Try congressman, as in Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao), who yesterday before his peers denied he was the "burlesk king" so named by a tabloid for reportedly being forced to run naked through a Makati hotel lobby by a cuckolded husband last May.

In a privileged speech at the House of Representatives, Nograles branded as a "brazen lie" and "malicious fabrication" a report in Abante Tonite that he was the congressman alluded to who was caught by a police major having sex with his wife at a hotel. The stories had also been going the rounds in radio and in text messages in Davao.

The reports had dubbed Nograles the "burlesk king" in a series of blind stories that started two weeks ago.

The stories were written by Abante Tonite reporter Bernard Taguinod. ***(Related story on Page A12)***

Nograles, whose wife and son were in the gallery as he delivered his speech, said he had patiently waited out the last two weeks while the tabloid ran the stories without naming him.

He said his lawyers had told him the stories were blind items that could not be linked to him.

"That is why I am thankful Abante Tonite finally named me, because now this has become a pure and simple legal battle," Nograles said.

Nograles is expected to file a libel case against the tabloid, its editors and Taguinod.

In the series, it was reported that a Davao solon was caught "in flagrante delicto" with the wife of a police major at a posh Makati hotel sometime in May.

According to the reports, the woman, who is based in Davao, had asked her husband for permission to go to Manila for a few days on business.

Suspicious, the husband reportedly called up some former classmates at the Philippine Military Academy to tail his wife in Manila.

The major's mistahs followed the woman from the Manila domestic airport directly to the Makati hotel.

The woman allegedly did not check in but went straight to the room, which was registered under the name of Nograles.

The major's classmates reportedly staked out the hotel for three days until the raging husband arrived in Manila to confront his wife.

At the hotel, the tabloid report said, the police major caught his wife and the "burlesk king" in bed.

In his rage, the police major allegedly poked a gun at the naked solon and ordered him to run to the lobby.

Spice Boys get coveted positions

RIDING on their strong anti-Estrada stance in the last Congress, the Spice Boys have re-emerged to bag the most coveted posts in the new House of Representatives.

Lakas Representative Rolando Andaya Jr. (Camarines Sur), Robert Ace Barbers (Surigao del Norte) and Juan Miguel Zubiri (Bukidnon) were named chairs of the three most powerful House committees—appropriations, accounts and legislative franchises, respectively.

Conspicuously left out was Malabon-Navotas Rep. Federico Sandoval, the only remaining Spice Boy after former representatives Michael Defensor and Hernani Braganza were named to the Macapagal Cabinet.

Sandoval will not be left holding the bag, however, after he was named senior vice chair to Andaya, Barbers and Zubiri.

"A matter of trust, work ethic and (the) public (perception) that we would work well," said Andaya by way of explaining why they got the appointments.

Andaya's committee will handle the national government's budget. He said he has been locking himself up in his office and poring over volumes of documents to prepare for the grueling hearings on the 2002 national budget.

"We're definitely coming in prepared and we're all up to the tasks given us," said the 32-year-old lawyer.

Sandoval said having the Spice Boys at the helm of key committees would assure that there would be "fiscal discipline" in governance.

"We have always been fiscalizers. We want to make sure the people around the President who are now running the show do not fall into the same trap that the former president fell into," Sandoval said.

The Spice Boys had stood against some of the biggest issues in the past administration, including Charter change, jaialai and the use of confiscated luxury vehicles.

Rocky Nazareno

Erap makes Sandigan appearance today

BY DONNA S. CUETO

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada is set to appear before the Sandiganbayan today for a pre-trial hearing of the perjury case against him even as government prosecutors sought to inhibit the court's 1st Division from hearing the case for alleged bias.

In what promises to be a showdown between the special prosecutors and the 1st Division, government lawyers vowed to bring up the motion to inhibit as the first order of business in today's hearing.

If the court rejects their motion, the prosecutors said they would take the matter all the way up to the Supreme Court.

"Why pursue the trial in that court? We'll find a remedy by which we can have a fair court," said special prosecutor Leonardo Tamayo.

The Sandiganbayan's 1st Division is headed by Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena, with Associate Justices Catalino Castañeda Jr., and Gregory Ong as members.

It earlier denied the prosecution's third attempt to amend the information in the perjury case.

This will be Estrada's third court appearance.

Security will be tight as in his first two appearances on June 27 and July 10, when he was arraigned for the perjury and plunder cases.

Estrada will be escorted from the Veterans Memorial Medical Center to the Sandiganbayan by the Police Security Protection Office headed by Gen. Danny Flores, court sheriff Ed Urieta said.

By 12 midnight last night, the entire Sandiganbayan building would have been already "sanitized," Urieta said.

A SWAT team from the Central Police District and a unit of the Special Action Forces will be on standby.

A Sandiganbayan source said that Estrada cannot waive a court appearance as he was a detainee under the court's jurisdiction.

Though he posted bail for the perjury case, he is still considered detained because of the plunder case, which is a non-bailable offense.

The court has directed Philippine National Police chief Leandro Mendoza to produce Estrada by 8:30 a.m. today for the pre-trial hearing.

The court also directed Estrada himself, through a letter dated July 6, to "appear personally before this court" today.

The prosecutors, however, said they would move to have the pre-trial reset because they wanted the 1st Division to inhibit itself from hearing the perjury case.

They filed a motion for reconsideration seeking to restore the amended information in the perjury case.

"We have all the evidence with us but we want a fair trial, we want a fair court. That is why we are asking the division to inhibit itself because there are indications that we cannot have a fair trial for the government in that division," Tamayo said.

House to probe P124-B tax perks

BY ROCKY NAZARENO

THE HOUSE of Representatives will investigate a finance department claim that the government stands to lose P124 billion because of tax perks given to investors, state corporations and non-profit educational institutions, Albay Rep. Jose Sarte Salceda said yesterday.

Salceda said Congress has to validate the DOF's figures "since we have yet to see a substantial study or analysis to back it up."

The DOF has argued that the country may have given away too many incentives and would like to stop the policy to raise much-needed revenues.

This has placed the finance department in direct conflict with the Department of Trade and Industry whose position is that perks are needed to attract investments.

"With the difficulty in raising taxes in a weak economy or in borrowing in international markets, it is indeed very tempting to quickly pull the plug on such revenue losses just to free up extra resources for the ambitious pro-poor programs of the Macapagal-Arroyo administration," Salceda said in a statement.

The congressman said that the DOF had apparently derived the figure "from a simplistic tabulation" of tax incentives, tax credits and tax subsidies granted in 1999 by the Philippine Export Zone Administration, the Board of Investments as well as all government corporations, government agencies, non-profit education institutes and duty-free shops.

Of the P124 billion, P87 billion or 70 percent accounted for Peza imports, P30 billion or 25 percent were for subsidies and credits to other government agencies while only P7 billion or 5 percent can be attributed to tax holidays/exemptions on capital equipment granted by the BOI.

Salceda said that the bigger issue for policymakers is whether the country would be better off with or without such incentives.

Disease stalks Mayon evacuees

LEGAZPI CITY—Local officials have expressed alarm over the rising incidence of diseases caused by the volcanic ash that showered the provinces of Albay, Sorsogon and Catanduanes after Mayon Volcano's eruption of June 26.

The Department of Health said 63 cases of upper respiratory infection, 57 of coughs and colds, 30 each of fever and influenza, and 10 of diarrhea have been reported.

The DOH advised residents in the three provinces to wear dust masks against the volcanic ash, which could cause respiratory ailments and eye irritation and predispose the residents to viral and bacterial infections.

Figures from the city health office, however, told a grimmer story.

At the nine evacuation centers in this city, the number of patients rose from 62 to 261.

Coughs, colds and fever topped the list of ailments at 101. Those suffering from hypertension numbered 10, while 5 each were stricken with diarrhea and bronchial asthma, according to Dr. Sarah Vasquez, city health officer.

DOH field workers also noted rising cases of sore eyes, asthma and tonsillitis at the evacuation centers in Camalig and Guinobatan towns.

The provincial health office reported 16 cases of sore eyes, six cases of asthma and three of tonsillitis in the two towns.

"Our health teams are closely monitoring the situation in the evacuation centers," provincial health officer Dr. Veronica Madulid said.

Residents not at the evacuation centers are likely to experience the same health risks, especially motorists, Madulid warned.

Provincial officials have been trying to get those residents not directly threatened by the volcano to return to their homes to ease the crowding at the evacuation centers.

Volcanologists monitoring Mayon said there has been a sustained forceful ejection of incandescent rock fragments from the crater accompanied by jet-like roaring and rumbling sounds heard as far away as this city and Sto. Domingo.

The lava splatter, which rose from 50 to 80 meters above the southeast crater rim, appeared larger and was hurled higher than on previous occasions, indicating stronger eruptions compared to the past two days.

The seismic network recorded only 12 high-frequency short-duration harmonic tremors, six low-frequency volcanic earthquakes and one low-frequency short-duration harmonic tremor but these less frequent occurrences were due to large rain signals that masked the seismographs.

Sulfur dioxide emission rates averaged 7,140 tons to 9,000 tons per day during the past two days.

Head volcanologist Ed Laguerta said the very high volume of gases emitted from the crater was consistent with the on-going lava explosions.

In addition, ground-swelling measurements indicated a still-inflated state of the volcano's edifice.

Ping in the dark on missing aides

BY CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO

SEN. Panfilo Lacson said yesterday he had no idea where his former aide, police Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, who is facing summary dismissal proceedings, could be.

Lacson, the former national police chief, said that the last time he talked with Aquino was before the opening of Congress in late July.

Neither did he know where another former aide, Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao was, Lacson said.

"I don't know (where they are). I don't have control over them anymore," he said.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Aquino.

The senator said he heard about the move to initiate summary dismissal proceedings against Aquino only from news reports.

The INQUIRER reported the other day that President Macapagal-Arroyo had given the go-signal for the Philippine National Police to initiate summary dismissal proceedings against Aquino for his unauthorized absences from the police force.

Since Aquino's and Mancao's promotion to their current rank involved presidential approval, a clearance from Malacañang would be needed to investigate them for any offense and to start any formal summary dismissal proceedings against them.

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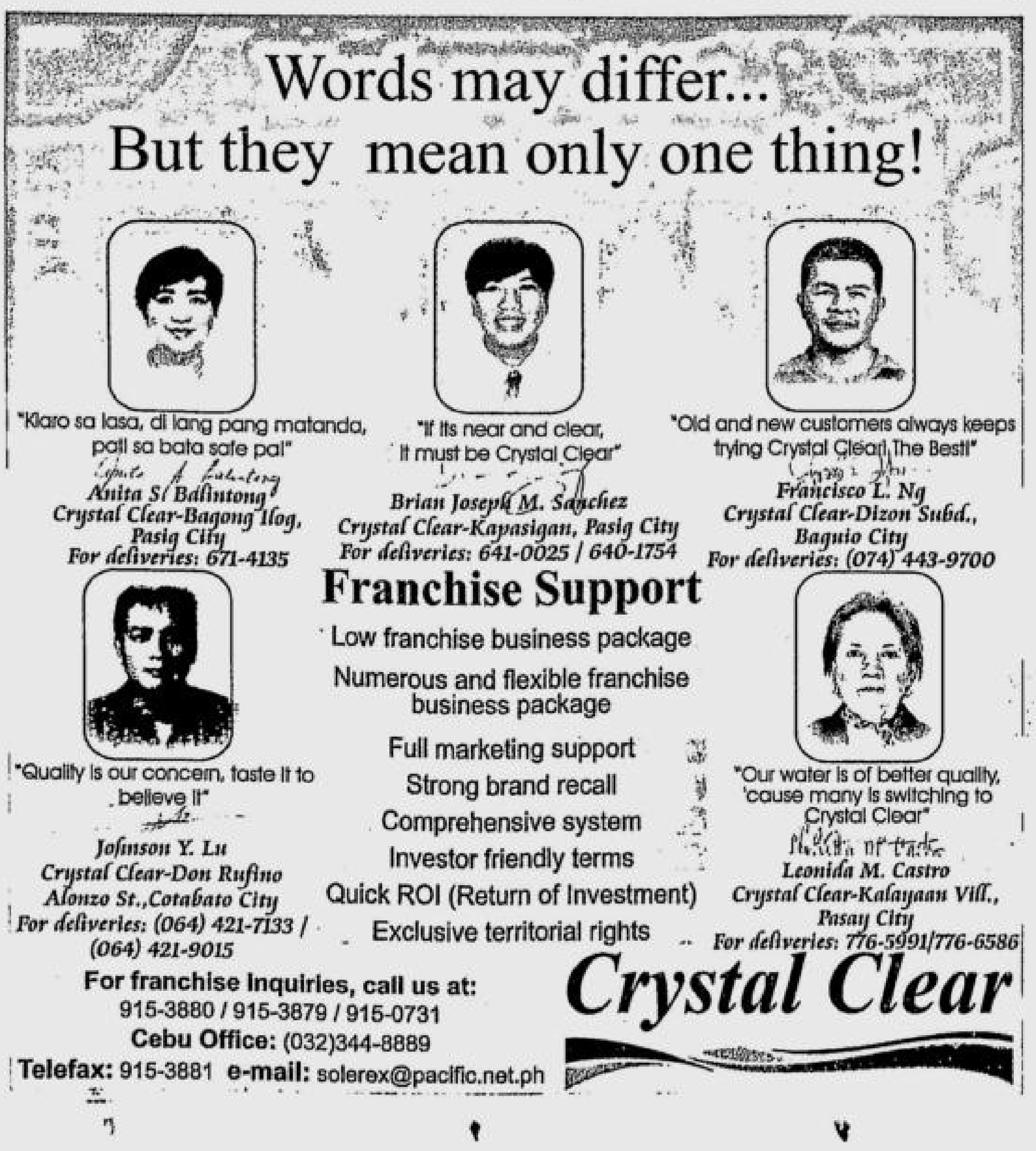
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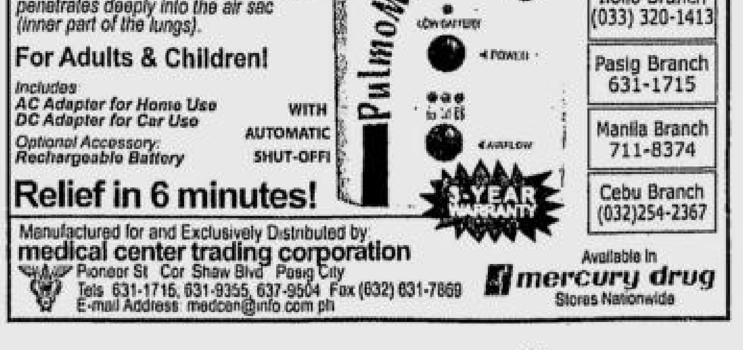
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ON POWELL'S CUE

AFP vows to finish Abu off in a month

By Carlito Pablo

THE ARMED Forces yesterday said it would try to resolve the Basilan hostage crisis within a month, following US Secretary of State Colin Powell's expression of concern over the prolonged crisis.

AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan told defense reporters that the hostage crisis would be over "soon."

"We will do our best," said Adan.

"We hope to get the hostages the soonest possible time," he said.

During a regional conference in Vietnam early this week, Powell expressed Washington's concern to Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona over the prolonged hostage crisis in Basilan where the Abu Sayyaf bandits are holding the American missionary couple, Martin and Gracia Burnham.

The Burnhams and another American, Guillermo Sobero, were among 20 people seized by the Abu Sayyaf from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan on May 27.

The Abu Sayyaf earlier claimed they had beheaded Sobero but his remains have yet to be found.

Asked about the condition of the Burnhams, Adan said: "What we only know is that they are still with (Abu Sayyaf spokesperson) Abu Sabaya."

Adan said the AFP has made significant inroads toward demolishing the support structure of the Abu Sayyaf since President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered a crackdown in Western Mindanao on July 13.

"We are neutralizing the support structure that keeps the Abu Sayyaf and it (support structure) is getting smaller and smaller," he said.

Adan said more than 100 members and supporters of the extremist group have been arrested and at least 46 formally charged.

"A lot has happened in the past three weeks. We are gaining as (evidenced) by the arrests," Adan said. "It's important to neutralize the support structure in order to get the big fish."

Adan earlier claimed that Sabaya was trying to break out of Basilan, taking the Burnhams with him.

Aside from the Burnhams, there are two other remaining Dos Palmas hostages.

Since fighting broke out in Basilan on June 1, the Abu Sayyaf took 17 more hostages from the towns of Lamitan and Lantawan.

PLDT buy-in of GMA 7 illegal, says solon

THE TELECOMS giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. violated the constitutional prohibition on foreign ownership of mass media when it acquired controlling interest in the television network GMA 7.

Southern Leyte Rep. Aniceto G. Saludo Jr. made this statement as he asked the National Telecommunications Commission to investigate deals like PLDT's buy-in of GMA 7 "so that constitutional limits are not circumvented."

Through Mediaquest Holdings Inc. (MHI), PLDT bought 66.67 percent of GMA Network Inc., a deal which Saludo said could violate constitutional restrictions on foreign ownership and management of mass media.

In a press release, Saludo said that, based on PLDT's own announcements, the company is now controlled by nominees of Indonesian interests in whose behalf the country's second largest broadcast network was acquired.

Aside from its television network led by Channel 7, GMA also operates 42 radio stations nationwide.

On Feb. 8, MHI, which is purportedly fully-owned by PLDT's Beneficial Trust Fund, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with GMA for the acquisition of a majority stake in the network. Another PLDT subsidiary, PLDT, which is characterized in the group's Annual Report 2000 as "the principal corporate vehicle for PLDT's e-commerce and multi-media businesses," is supporting the acquisition.

"It is clear from PLDT's own corporate disclosures that the foreign-owned telecoms giant is the real and true owner of GMA Network," Saludo said.

No 'open skies' until 2003

By TJ Burgonio

IT looks like "open skies" in the Philippines will have to wait until 2003.

Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez said yesterday implementation of an open skies agreement between the country and the United States a year ahead of schedule was not even discussed during recent air talks between the two nations.

"That was not tackled," Alvarez said in an interview.

He said the talks did not result in any major breakthroughs, but focused instead on such issues as code-sharing and the designation of flag-carriers.

A delegation of US aviation officials and their local counterparts met in Manila Monday ostensibly to discuss the "open skies" agreement, which would allow unlimited access to each other's air space.

The Freedom to Fly Coalition (FFC), which is pushing for a more liberalized local aviation industry, said US officials had broached the idea of implementing the agreement a year before October 2003.

October 2003 was the deadline set for local officials to notify the US government if the Philippines intended to follow the bilateral agreement.

The agreement, which contains an "open skies" provision, dates back to 1982 but its implementation was put off at least five times due to stiff opposition from the country's flag-carrier, Philippine Airlines, according to the FFC.

Alvarez admitted, however, the Philippines has no choice but to adopt an "open skies" policy in 2003. The policy removes government restrictions on routes, capacities, flight frequencies and fares.

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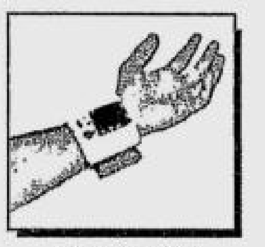

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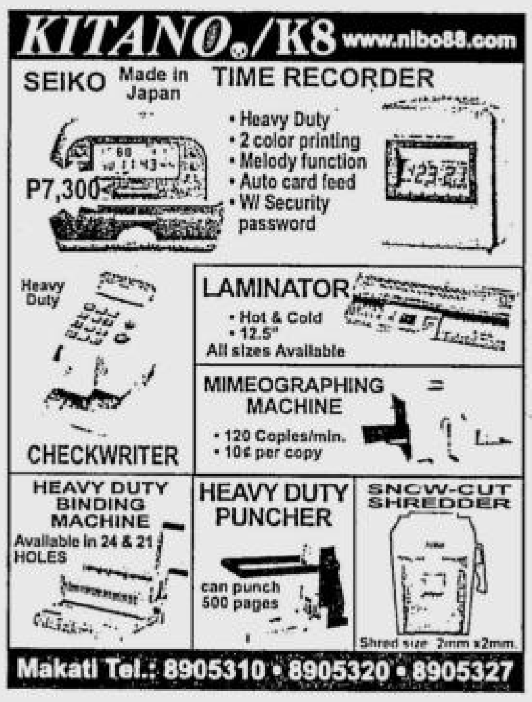

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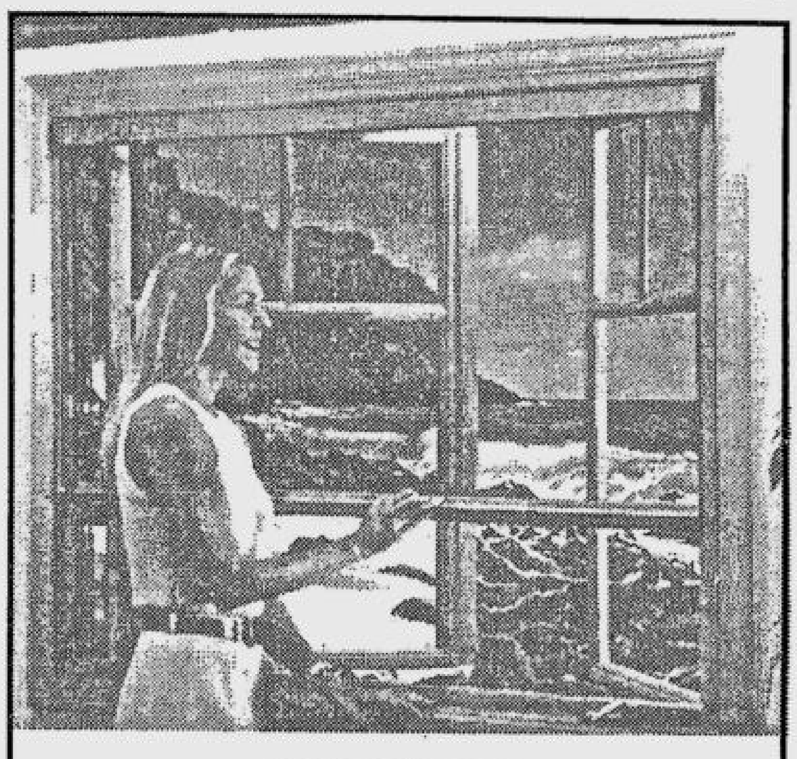

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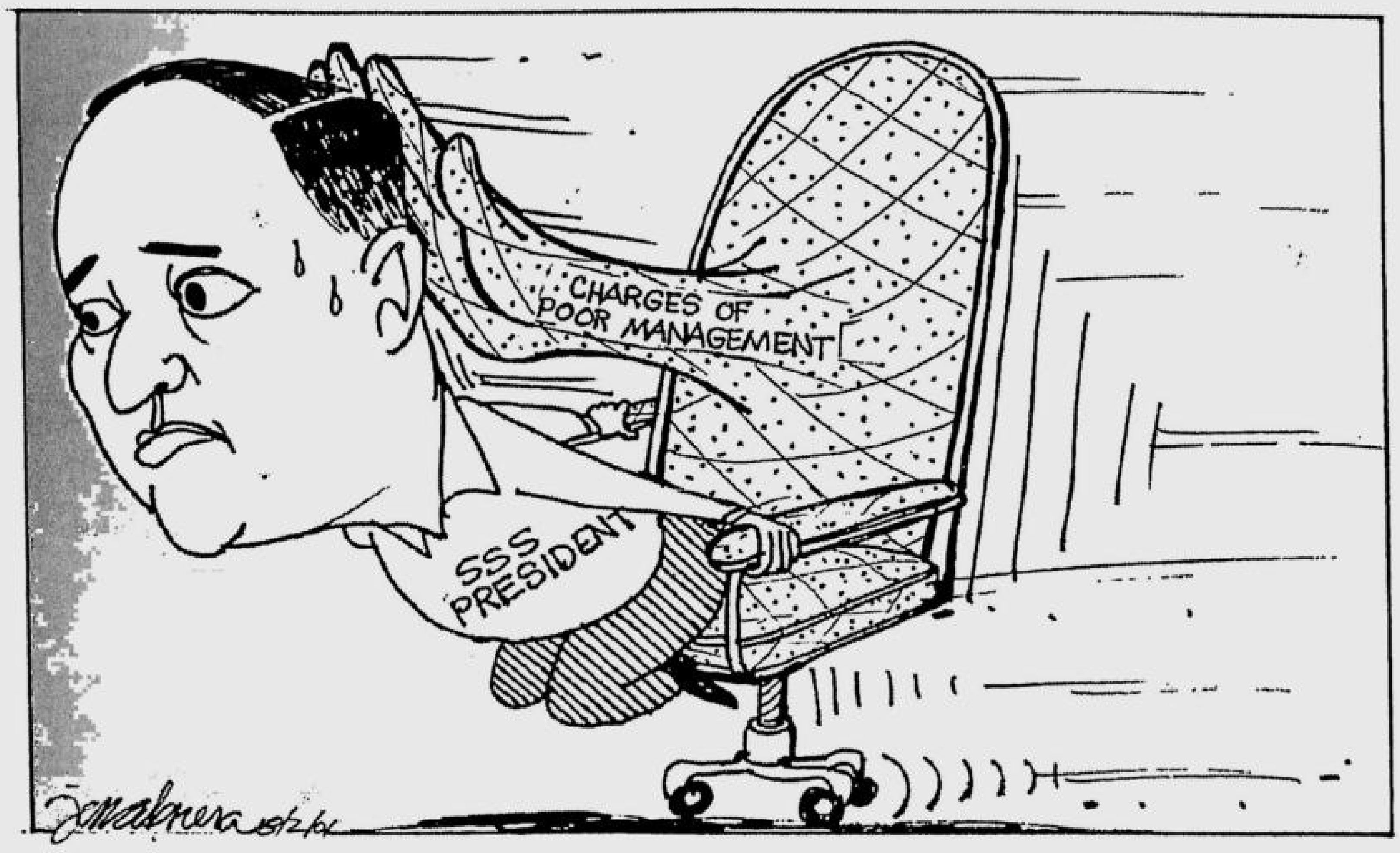

EDITORIALS

Blackmail

THE SOCIAL Security System is locked in a stalemate between its president and CEO Vitaliano Nañagas II and the majority of SSS employees who are demanding his removal.

The employees, members of the Alert and Concerned Employees for a Better SSS, are up in arms over Nañagas' alleged "tyrannical" and "despotic" style of management. They have been holding daily wildcat strikes and noise barrages over the past two months, stepping up pressure for his dismissal.

The employees at first opposed his plan to privatize the SSS, but came up with another reason—his management style—after the government reassured them that there would be no privatization. The protest was sparked by reforms initiated by Nañagas, among which were the abolition of committees without consulting employees and hiring executives without consulting the hiring and promotions board.

The giveaway, however, is that the employees are diverting the issues toward "management style" and away from the root cause of the unrest: the investigation ordered by Nañagas into the behest investments made by the previous SSS management in corporations owned by cronies of deposed President Estrada, such as Belle Corp. and the purchase by Equitable Bank of PCI Bank. Records show that SSS pension funds were used to leverage transactions that benefited Estrada's friends. There are allegations that Estrada received kickbacks from these deals.

There's something curious whenever employees resist reforms because they don't like a new boss' "style of management." And it is nonsense for SSS employees to argue that they can remove a manager using people power on the grounds that people power installed the new administration. These are two different issues. The employees would do better if they stopped insulting the public's intelligence with their flimsy arguments.

As far as the public is concerned, Nañagas has not abused his office. Neither has he been shown to be incompetent and, most important of all, he has not used SSS funds for dubious investments, to the prejudice of SSS members. There is in this dispute an element of conflict between the corporate culture introduced by Nañagas from the private sector and the bureaucratic culture in the public sector that resists reforms, especially the rooting out of corruption.

This resistance to change was encountered by Secretary Raul Roco at the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, and Secretary Dick Gordon at the Department of Tourism. Gordon, for example, offended DOT employees when he told them not to litter their premises with cigarette butts.

Rene Bañez, the new internal revenue commissioner, is another good example of an official whose attempts at reforms are meeting strong resistance. He is reorganizing the Bureau of Internal Revenue and is harnessing key personnel sidelined to "floating" status to improve the BIR's collection machinery. What he got from employees who were plucked out of their "turfs" was a criminal charge for plunder.

If civil servants can obstruct reforms because they don't like a particular management style or the face of a new manager, this is like putting new reform-minded managers under the gun. This administration should not encourage this blackmail carried out in the name of people power. If it backs off from pressure now, it can never get things done.

The public sector needs a hefty dose of private sector management culture to shock it out of its inefficiency and inertia.

Refuge

THE SSS protesters' case is further weakened by the intervention of SSS executive vice president Horace Templo, who is pressing for Nañagas' ouster. Templo has plenty to answer for the behest investments made under the administration of former SSS president and chair Carlos Arellano on behalf of Estrada. Templo is covered by the investigation into these transactions. He is seeking refuge behind the protesting SSS employees who, in effect, are imposing their own standards of management.

It is valid to ask why during the term of Arellano, the employees didn't go on strike over the behest investments that channeled pension funds to dubious transactions.

Taking common cause with the employees is not likely to clear Templo of responsibility in the behest investments. During Arellano's time, he was among the top officials who approved these transactions.

'Colorum' buses to be legalized

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE LAND Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) has been reported to be planning to legitimize the hordes of *colorum* jeepneys and buses. "They cannot be stopped anyway" is the excuse. What a cop-out. If you can't lick 'em, join 'em, eh?

Because the LTFRB is incompetent (or corrupt?) and cannot (or do not want) to remove the *colorum* vehicles from the streets, it plans to legalize them by giving them franchises. What a great idea to eliminate criminality. By making legal what is illegal, the LTFRB immediately eradicates crime. It is no different from legalizing *jueteng* because it cannot be stopped anyway. It is like legalizing prostitution because nobody has been able to stop it through the centuries.

With that kind of thinking, the next step would be to legalize drug trafficking, kidnapping and bank robbery because the police has been unable to stop them anyway. We have already legalized squatting through that stupid Lina Law; we have already legalized sidewalk vending and parking on sidewalks through the tolerance, indifference, incompetence (and corruption?) of traffic policemen and aides. The time is not far away when other forms of crime would be legalized, too.

While the Land Transportation Office (LTO) has been praised by no less than the President for reducing the processing time of drivers' licenses from weeks to half-an-hour, its twin office, the LTFRB, is moving backwards. The Light Rail Transit and Metrorail were set up as mass transit systems to reduce the number of vehicles clogging the streets below them. But that never happened. Instead, the number of vehicles continued to increase and more and more *colorum* vehicles added to the congestion.

The originally *colorum* FX taxicabs have already been legalized by the LTFRB. Now it plans to legalize the *colorum* jeepneys and buses. There is also an overpopulation of legal and *colorum* tricycles, but they are outside the jurisdiction of the LTFRB. Tricycle permits are issued by local government units.

With the Metrorail already operating on Edsa, the LTFRB should not renew some bus franchises on Edsa—starting with bus companies with bad records—to ease the load on that thoroughfare. But no, the LTFRB wants to legalize the *colorums*. Because that is the easiest (and most lucrative?) thing to do.

* * *

Speaking of the Philippine National Police, it wants to stop the showing of the movie "Red Diaries" allegedly because it "puts the police force in a bad light." In one story of the trilogy, the heroine, new sexpot Assunta de Rossi, is married to a policeman who allowed her to be gang-raped by five fellow policemen when he discovers her illicit love affair. Foul, cried PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza.

The PNP shouldn't worry about De Rossi or "Red Diaries." They cannot foul the image of the PNP. Its image is already very foul. And not because of any movie but because of the real-life actions and behavior of policemen. Without mentioning the *tong* collection, drug trafficking and addiction, protection of gambling dens and human rights abuses by policemen, the poor record of the police force in enforcing traffic rules and solving crimes is enough to give it a bad image.

I think the PNP chief should pay more attention to these shortcomings instead of focusing attention on De Rossi and "Red Diaries."

* * *

How lucky Mang Pandoy is. President Macapagal, after trotting out Jason, Jomar and Erwin during her Sona, announced that she would send people out to locate Mang Pandoy and help him.

That's very kind of her. But I think the help to Mang Pandoy should not be in the form of doles but in the form of teaching him a livelihood. Like teaching him carpentry so he can make furniture out of discarded crates of pinewood as his neighbors in Quezon City are doing. You can see their handiwork being sold on Commonwealth Avenue before reaching Ever-Gotesco. Some of them are already being sold in classy furniture stores and department stores.

He was already helped by former President Fidel V. Ramos and former Speaker Jose de Venecia. He was given a job at the House of Representatives and his own television program, given funds for a cooperative in his neighborhood but he failed in all these endeavors. Teach him a job he can do.

But why concentrate on Mang Pandoy, Jason, Jomar and Erwin? What about other, more deserving, poor?

The observation e-mailed by reader Silver Jimenez may sound unkind but it should open the eyes of the poor and good Samaritans. He wrote:

"Mang Pandoy carries one of the attitudes that has been lingering in our culture: *tamad*. He was given all the opportunities, but he just has no guts and willingness to succeed in life.

"*Ito ang maling kasabihan na nasa utak pa rin nila: 'Kung anak ka ng pobre, pobre ka ring tatanda.*'"

Not true of course, as proven by the numerous poor children who have succeeded in life, some of whom even became tycoons.

Good luck to Mang Pandoy. Don't muff your second chance.

* * *

Comments are welcome at asiseeit@pacific.net.ph

Recessional

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

THIS will be the hundredth piece I am writing for this newspaper. It will also be the last. When I took up this engagement, the INQUIRER and I agreed that I would write for a year. That year has come and gone. It is time for me to move on to other things, and time for them to accommodate other views.

It is fitting to thank the newspaper for bearing with me, my editors for their attention to my prose, and above all, the readers—however many or few they may be—for their patience and kindness. I do this sincerely.

I am preparing a recessional. After almost two decades of writing, with interruptions, it is time to walk into the mists. I am gradually disengaging from all my public commitments and hope to complete the process before the end of the year.

Then, for the first time in my life, I will be truly free. Answerable only to myself. Free to pay some attention to my health. Able to travel (although this is now prohibitively expensive), perhaps to write a book, watch some plays or to teach or study a course or two. As for teaching, it may be History; as for studying, anything from cooking to Zen. Or perhaps I will do nothing at all. But these plans interest only me and I won't bore you further with them.

What you see in these pages, for want of a better metaphor, is only the tip of the iceberg. You don't witness the hours spent checking and rechecking sources, grammar and facts. In the case of some columnists, you are unaware of the vast pool of sources they draw from but only see evident the liquid amber of their printed thoughts. The quality of their connections and sources are not always manifest.

The whole writing experience is redolent of the plumber's explanation for charging $100 for a quick twist of the wrench to stanch a leak: "The charge is $1 for fixing it and $99 for knowing how."

> The years ahead, because of their dangers and risks, have more of my fears than my hopes

If I have deep regrets, they are over the many missed opportunities we have had over the last three decades. Martial law. Edsa. Erap. The "might have beens" and "almost weres" of our history. Always our hopes were thwarted or misplaced.

Meanwhile, we have seen a steady decline in public discourse. We have poisoned the well we now drink from. We prefer elocution contests to sensible but unflashy public administration, sound bytes to careful but complex reflection. We have seen the effects of the decline in all our national institutions, bar none: politics, schools, media, family, church, military, bureaucracy, labor and business. We have sown the wind. The reaping is still to come.

We bandy about words like reconciliation but do not mean them. Our polity is like an automobile with a lawn mower engine but the brakes of a Ferrari. We give every heckler a veto, then wonder why reform is impossible. We prefer to demonize each other in our public and, above all, private conversation and then make ritual claims of national unity. In the words of the Prince of Verona in the closing of "Romeo and Juliet," all are punished.

The storm is almost upon us; the locusts are almost here. The coming few years will be the most difficult in our history, perhaps even more difficult than the war years. The problems will also be global. Our enemy is ourselves and we all are determined to make the enemy pay dearly. We have mastered the art of blaming others for our misfortunes and we miss no opportunity to take a dig.

Having dug ourselves into a hole, we dig furiously deeper, hoping to discover Yamashita's hoard, or Marcos' billions. Only the sewer lies beneath. We need to look up.

There is a strange divergence in public life. In many cases, some of those with whom I have had the greatest disagreements on public issues are the very ones I have privately respected or admired. Conversely, it is not uncommon to find myself agreeing with the public positions of others but find them wanting as human beings. Perhaps that says more about my own failings than theirs. There are blacks and whites but there are far larger patches of gray than I would prefer to acknowledge.

There are many things I have witnessed and learned in the decades past. The years ahead, because of their dangers and risks, have more of my fears than my hopes. Perhaps my closing words should be those inscribed 2,500 years ago above the entrance to the temple of the Delphic Oracle: "Know thyself" and "Nothing to excess." Not even column writing. Goodbye.

PCCI controversy

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

ONE indication that l'affaire Mike Arroyo is on the wane is that, as Sen. John Osmeña observed, the *kanyonero* of the "Guns of August," Sen. Blas Ople, has left for his old haunt when he was labor minister of Marcos, Geneva, perhaps to cool off for a few weeks. If reports swirling in the Senate are true, there may be another indication: Sen. Nene Pimentel is said to have left for Washington to attend a conference of local governments.

* * *

It seems that while everyone was so engrossed in the Mike Arroyo-Bing Rodrigo controversy, there was an equally big controversy surrounding the Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. (PCCI), said to be controlled by Erap crony Jaime Dichaves. The only problem is that the PCCI issue is more technical, while the Arroyo issue was more human oriented, hence easier to sensationalize.

At yesterday's media forum at Cuidad Fernandina hosted by Press Secretary Noel Cabrera's better half, Ces Cabrera, the media met with the representatives of the telecommunications industry's biggest players, such as Globe and Smart. Note that House Bill 12671 granting the PCCI a franchise to set up a telecom clearinghouse was passed by the Erap-controlled House on Dec. 19 last year while the Senate impeachment trial was in progress, while the Senate approved it last Feb. 6 just after President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo assumed power. Last April she vetoed the bill on the ground that the purely private company was setting up a monopoly by seeking to make all telecom services—from e-mail and cell phone calls to Internet services and even pagers—pass through its clearinghouse.

* * *

The interesting thing was that Congress appears to have passed the bill without going through proper procedures, indicating how *malakas* its sponsors were, and how even more *malakas* PCCI is. So quiet were the proceedings that the big telecom players claimed they were not notified of hearings held by Congress. They said they only heard that this private clearinghouse for the industry was being set up only when the Arroyo-Rodrigo controversy erupted two weeks ago. Recall that Rodrigo said over radio that she had heard that Arroyo and his pals received P50 million in exchange for working for a "recall" of his wife's veto of the PCCI deal. Arroyo has denied it.

* * *

Considering what the PCCI bill proposed to do—in effect to add an extra layer to the telecom set-up in this country—the industry players' claim that they had not been invited to the hearing held by Congress is quite stupendous. As Rudy Salalima, senior vice president of Globe, put it, "I don't know if Congress held a hearing or hearings. But the fact is that we were not notified about it." Normally such a franchise would entail hearings to enable all those who are going to be affected to air their side. Apparently the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) during the Estrada administration, then headed by Joseph Santiago, approved the idea, but new Commissioner Eliseo Rio Jr. recommended a veto as did the Neda.

* * *

One thing is sure: had there been no change in administration at Edsa II, the PCCI clearinghouse would have been installed without any obstacle. The question is, who would have benefited from it? Considering the propensity of the Erap *barkada* for making money out of just about everything, that question, in the minds of many, is not difficult to answer.

Questions have also been raised about the people behind the firm. An industry representative noted that its president, Pacifico Marcelo, was a virtual nobody a few years back until Estrada appointed him to the Philcomsat board. Then it was on to PCCI.

* * *

I did some checking out and found out that Congress transmitted the enrolled PCCI franchise bill to the Palace on March 19. Why did it take so long to transmit it? Rep. Miguel Zubiri, who was an opposition member of the House franchise committee during the Erap era and who now heads it in the new Congress, stressed to me that two hearings were held by the House and that the allegations of big players in the industry that they were not notified may just be their way of passing the blame to Congress. Zubiri also stressed that nothing in HB 12671, authored principally by Rep. Jun Baculio, pointed to the creation of a clearinghouse, and that it was just one of 17 franchise bills passed by the 11th Congress.

Sen. Tito Sotto, chair of the Senate committee on public services, sought to stress the ordinariness of passing franchise bills. Sen. John Osmeña pointed out that when franchise bills are passed, there's usually no quorum, just like in the case of local bills. But he said that his colleague has a lot of explaining to do about this bill.

The big players stressed, however, that the very name of the corporation indicated this all-encompassing intention, and so the lawmakers should have been wary. Besides, as INQUIRER columnist and noted lawyer Tony Carpio pointed out last Sunday in this space, the PCCI's articles of incorporation stated that "the primary purpose of this corporation is to engage in the provision of clearinghouse services to communications and gaming entities."

* * *

Last Monday just about everyone in the telecom industry came out to explain that they support the President's veto of the PCCI franchise bill because it would have enabled the private company to force all the existing telecom systems to interconnect to it, contrary to the government policy of liberalization and demonopolization. "Why favor a private enterprise with that kind of clout?" they said in a statement, adding that the PCCI would have been a de-facto monopoly even when it has no subscribers. Lawyer Rogelio Quevedo, head of Smart Communications' legal relations and international services, said the PCCI would have been, in effect, "just a toll collector." But unfortunately, the extra layer would have added another burden to the industry whose members already have their own interconnection arrangement. Besides, critics noted, that extra layer would have added costs to the consumers at a time of a severe economic crunch.

Hopefully, the idea of a clearinghouse for the telecom industry, the next time it rears its head in Congress, would be discussed openly so that all sides will be heard, including the customers. No more surprises. One lesson here for those in the industry, like Globe, Smart and BayanTel, is that they have to monitor the activities of the franchise and public services committees in both chambers of Congress

Man under fire

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT was a good story. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo supposedly got so fed up with Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza during a Cabinet meeting that she gave him a dressing down in front of all her other Cabinet members. When Braganza tried to argue his point, Education Secretary Raul Roco supposedly counseled the young official: "There are only two rules of management. No. 1: The boss is always right. No. 2: When in doubt, consult Rule No. 1."

Braganza sheepishly confirms the basic accuracy of the story, but says the President's ire was directed at him not for his performance or ability or lack of either, but because she thought his targets were "too low" and far less ambitious than she wanted.

What I find truly remarkable, though, is not that the President would upbraid a member of her Cabinet, which is her prerogative, but that the incident would be reported on with such glee. The story comes on the heels of similar news reports leaking from Malacañang about how the President is getting ready to revamp her Cabinet. The President herself would only mention the names of the Cabinet members in whom she has "confidence," naming only four. There has been no effort so far to clarify the reports or seek to placate the feelings of the slighted officials.

When asked about rumors of their possible dismissal, Cabinet secretaries trot out the cliché of serving at the pleasure of the President. Members of the chief executive's official family are indeed expected to owe her total devotion and loyalty. But can't the corollary be true, too? That the President in turn owes the men and women in her Cabinet loyalty or at least consideration?

* * *

THE STORY about Braganza's moment of discomfiture mentioned only a "member of the Macapagal Cabinet" as its source. This is not the first story to come out from a Cabinet meeting about the President's displeasure at a handpicked official. A blind item some months back alleged the President nearly walked out of a meeting when an official could not give a creditable report on the ongoing peace talks with the National Democratic Front. Again, Braganza was a "suspect," since he was also involved in the Norway negotiations.

Unlike President Ramos who ordered his Cabinet to "toe the line" and keep up a united front, President Macapagal seems to relish dissension and tension among the ranks of her senior officials. Or at least she seems to tolerate it to a remarkable degree.

My own reading of the situation is that the President, swept into office by a loose coalition of forces, felt she had to make too many compromises to please her varied stakeholders. Now six months into her presidency, she's getting ready to remake her administration into one she's more comfortable with. Those whom she might have felt "forced" into recruiting to please different sectors are now being put through the wringer, forced to jump through hoops to prove their worth and loyalty. It's no accident, I think, that those pushed by the "civil society" are nowhere on her list of "favorites."

* * *

OTHER commentators have already noted how the agrarian reform portfolio seems "jinxed," with many an agriculture secretary coming under fire for what is essentially a "damned if you do and damned if you don't" situation. Do your job too well and you become the target of so many powerful and influential vested interests, such as landowning legislators or even relatives of the President you serve. Do your job cautiously and judiciously, and you are the target of various farmers' organizations who suspect you're in the pocket of the landowning class.

Which is why, to my mind, it is particularly important for the President to show support for the agrarian reform secretary, whomever he or she may be. Agrarian reform is a contentious program that flies in the face of an entrenched system of land and asset ownership. On one hand you have the landowners who understandably would resist giving up even a portion of the land that may have been in the family for generations. On the other, there are thousands, perhaps millions, of landless peasants chafing under a generations-old system that has kept them mired in poverty.

This is the test of any President's sincerity in carrying out basic social reform. Will—or can—a President resist the contending forces and stand by an official who has been handed the responsibility of implementing a mandate?

* * *

THE PRESIDENT'S support is particularly key as the DAR the last few years has been facing the "most difficult and contentious" area of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

This covers some 1.19 million hectares of private agricultural lands, including haciendas and commercial farms, whose redistribution is being met by a blizzard of lawsuits and delaying action. Incredibly, though the law says that the DAR, as a quasi-judicial body, has the sole authority to decide land ownership issues in a "CARP-able" property, some judges have been unusually eager to issue restraining orders against legal DAR orders.

On another front, landowning legislators in the House have shown a propensity for rechanneling money earmarked for land acquisition into infrastructure projects, delaying the redistribution of agricultural lands.

To this end, says Braganza, he is launching the "Bayan-Anihan" program, meant to fast-track land acquisition and the distribution of support services, such as credit, irrigation and farm-to-market roads for land reform beneficiaries. Also a target is the speeding up of the "installation" of beneficiaries already holding valid CLOAs or certificates of land ownership and acquisition, but who have, for one reason or another, been denied access to the land.

But all the earnest and ambitious plans and targets would be for naught if, in the public perception, the man in charge of this vital but contentious program does not enjoy the full confidence of his boss.

Blood on the mountain

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

HERE is one book I wish the members of the Abu Sayyaf would read. I don't know what the book would do to them, how it would affect them. But I want them to read it because they are among the main characters of the story.

"Into the Mountain: Hostaged by the Abu Sayyaf," by Jose Torres Jr., reads like a small novel set on an island and a mountain somewhere, where people go about their ordinary lives, not necessarily the way most of us do, until something terrible happens and changes the course of their lives and their future as well. As the title suggests, the book is about the hostage-taking that happened in Basilan in March 2000. But more importantly, it is about the individuals who died, suffered and survived. Who were they, how did they.

It is also about the people whose middle name is cruelty.

Weaves and reads like fiction, but fiction it is not. As author Torres says, "Every character is flesh and blood, every incident a fact, every village a cartographic reality, every quotation a faithful transcription from the narratives of witnesses and participants."

Torres handles every character's story with sensitivity and respect. He lets the individuals tell their stories in the way they know how, he lets their individuality stand out by standing aside. Oh yes, that requires a lot of humility on the part of the writer. Especially because this is not fiction.

Well, when one beholds stories such as the ones told by the hostages, one cannot but bend one's knees in reverence for the pain and the terror they endured. Here is sacred, bloody ground that the writer must tread via the recollections of the characters.

"Into the Mountain" is a story that was crying out to be written. "In the late 1980s," Torres recalls, "when I went home to Mindanao, my Muslim friends told me that if I wanted to become a successful journalist, I should study Islam and understand the religion by heart, because it would become the 'wave of the future.' I tried and failed."

Torres did become a successful journalist but "the wave of the future" seemed to have overtaken him. Until he found the story. Or the story found him.

The story begins with a portent of things to come—incidents that happened even before March 2000, the interplay of characters in what seems to be a surreal setting. The action begins in Chapter 2, "The Morning the Bandits Came." The men in black had arrived.

Many Filipinos have read in newspapers and watched on TV the unfolding of the hostage-taking in Basilan that involved 49 people, among them a Claretian priest, teachers and students and the Abu Sayyaf bandits who held them captive in the mountains for almost two months. There have been first-hand accounts from the survivors that gave us glimpses of what it had been like to stare death in the face and to see one's companions die, but "Into the Mountain" gives us a more textured picture, more depth, more understanding of what it is to be human. And inhuman.

I think the secret here is that Torres allowed his characters to simply be themselves—in their past and present settings—to weave their stories. If Torres were a camera, he simply followed them quietly and respectfully, not interrupting too much. This is not to say that Torres did nothing. He did the great thing: he knew how to let them tell it.

Says Torres: "This was not an easy story to write because I did not think about it. I just let the pieces fall; I just let the material flow. I did try to provide some context, but still in a story-driven format." As we say, a story writing itself. Well, in fact you need a good storyteller to let this happen. Torres tries and succeeds.

As editor John Nery says in the intro: "I was blown away. With remarkable intuition, Joe had divined exactly where the real story lay. It lay in *story*—that is, in the narratives of the witnesses and participants, in the retelling and detailing of the protagonists..."

Central to the story is the life of Fr. Rhoel Gallardo who was among those who were killed/beheaded. But his life and death alone would not be able to sustain the plot of "Into the Mountain." There had to be a Mr. Rubio, a bishop, a Khaddafy Janjalani, an Abu Sabaya, a Marissa, a Kipyong, the children, the teachers and the government soldiers. Captors, captives, rescuers, next of kin, friends, neighbors, classmates.

One walks, stumbles and groans with Mr. Rubio who attempts several times and pleads to meet death head-on, but fails. His death wish never realized, he survives with the burden of telling his story about despair and flashes of courage.

On Page 101: "Then he saw another chance to die. They were climbing a steep hill when he fell down and could not move an inch off the ground. 'Please push me off the cliff and just tell Khaddafy later that I fell off,' he pleaded. 'Have mercy on me, kill me now.'

"'You want to die again?' a bandit asked. He called on his companions and asked them to help him carry the old teacher. 'Let us throw him down the cliff,' the bandit said. They dragged him down the edge. Mr. Rubio could see the rocks down below but he chose to look into the ocean and pray."

I won't tell you what happened next.

"Into the Mountain" is not simply a novelized, cinematized account of a tragic event. It provides a lot of context woven into the narratives. Separately at the end, it also gives a historical background on the terrorist group ("The Abu Sayyaf Chronology") and the island of Basilan ("The Way to the Iron: From the Queen of Spain to Magsaysay's Doctor-Priest").

I read Torres' opus last week when it was about to go to press and I had to read from proofs that were slipping from my fingers. Work like this has to be read like a good book should be—with reverence and awe, in solitude.

* * *

(*Por favor*, don't write to ask me for copies. Order from Claretian Publications, Box 4, Diliman, Quezon City. Tel. No. 9213984, e-mail claret@cnl.net.)

Black-nose workout program in Manila

YOUNGBLOOD

C. Childers

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THE RACE will start in two weeks, and I don't think I'm in shape. Like other adventure races, it involves three days of round-the-clock, multisport endurance competition, including mountain biking, trekking, swimming, paddling and other sports. Held in some of the most obscure, stunningly beautiful corners of this country, they are a story in themselves. But that's not what this article is about. It's training in Manila that has given me some of my most memorable moments in the Philippines.

After bungee-jumping off a bridge taped to a skateboard, kayaking down so many unexplored rivers and taking jeepney rides to Tondo at midnight, it takes a lot to make me nervous. But my recent workouts have left me jittery and set me thinking about getting health insurance for the first time. When I arrive home after a long bicycle ride, my skin and nostrils are charcoal black, and I wonder if I have actually helped my body get healthier or contributed to my early demise. When I am forced to follow a poison-spewing bus, I get visions of the doctors doing an autopsy and concluding after seeing my tar-blackened respiratory system, "Oh, another two-pack-a-day smoker." Then I imagine my friends protesting, "Nah, didn't touch the stuff, but he did ride his bike in Manila."

Manila drivers make biking seem like a game fraught with grave consequences. I have met motorists who looked me straight in the eye as I rolled down toward them and then promptly cut me off, almost spreading me out on their hood, all because they wanted to get ahead of other vehicles waiting for the green light. Buses and jeeps bob and weave like roller derby racers. Biking or jogging on these streets sharpens that knife-edge, since there are some monstrous holes in the pavement. I have narrowly missed running into holes that resemble Viet Cong booby traps, rusty, exposed metal and pungent black water.

I am constantly on the lookout for dogs as some places seem to be populated by as many canines as people. Most times they just go about their job by barking a bit and unenthusiastically giving a short chase, but some actually can get very territorial and try to carve out steaks from my legs. I have developed a kind of drunken Bruce Lee half-jog, half-roundhouse kick to drive their kind away. I know it gives the spectators good entertainment value. A tear in one sock reminds me of that one time in Makati where my attempts to fend them off didn't work.

On one ridiculously late ride, I stopped at a corner store and noticed that the owners had fallen into a deep slumber. My "*Tao po*'s" couldn't rouse them, so I dropped several one-peso coins on the metal shelf. On the fifth peso, the woman popped her head and lit a cigarette that was inexplicably already in her mouth. Her business partner groggily raised her head and suddenly stopped, frozen by the sight of this white *engkanto* cutting into her dreams.

My favorite times of the day are dawn and dusk, since they allow me to observe situations unnoticed like a ghost, instead of being an interruption or attraction. At dawn, people are too busy putting their day into motion to notice me. At dusk, people are focused on using the last fleeting moments to put their day in order.

One long walk from Ermita to Pasay at daybreak found me passing through narrow corridors and going by kitchens animated with the sound of clanking pots and frying breakfast. The surreal calm of the early morning gradually gave way to signs of life. A 10-year-old girl stumbled out of a doorway, peso bills clenched in her fists to buy *pan de sal*, rubbing her sleepy eyes, too tired to stare or care about my alien appearance..

A typical example of the circus-like randomness of my workout schedule is what happened to me recently. Unable to cross Edsa to Pioneer, I pedaled down to the bridge, carried my bike to cross under the Mandaluyong side of the bridge to get to the northbound lane. Assuming there would be a stairway, I ventured down. Weathering the torrent of "Hey Joe's" (Is there a place in Europe or the Middle East where locals yelp out, "Heeeey JunJun! *Saan ka pupunta*?") from the basketball players whose game I interrupted, I asked an old lady (they are the easiest to approach; they've seen it all) if there was a way up. Two children guided me through the most enjoyably convoluted route up to Edsa through some people's living rooms. I had to lift the mountain bike over kitchen tables, making one woman choke on her chicken bones in surprise. Finally, amazingly, we were back on Edsa, the 100 vertical feet from river to bridge taking me on a memorable journey. I thanked the kids and rolled on.

So why do I put up with the pollution that coats my nostrils with coal-like soot, jokers waiting to heckle me on every corner and drivers who operate on the principle that "Might makes right"? It's because of the people I meet. I get to see people from all walks of life: from the bankers on Ortigas who raise their eyebrows when they see me covered with mud from head to toe to the squatters by the Pasig into whose Good Friday Mass I stumble ("Hey Joe, wanna join our Mass?") to the men who offer their cups filled with gin and ask, "Hey Joe, wanna shot?" which I am usually quite happy to oblige, all in the name of international relations, of course. From the bar girls of Burgos Street in Makati who whistle as I weave my way though flower vendors and club doormen to kind Aida under the Quezon Avenue MRT station, for whom I stop to talk and buy *buko* juice from every time I have a long ride to Valenzuela. And, no matter how exhausting or challenging a workout might be, I can always count on the welcome of the hordes of kids around my apartment complex. Their smiles, their touch and their questions always lift my spirits no matter how thick the toxic mud on my face is or how many near-death experiences I might have had during the course of my journey.

One night, at the end of a four-hour workout, I was nearing home when something practically locked the brakes on my bike forcing me to a full stop. From the Edsa bridge I saw the full moon shimmering on the surface of the meandering Pasig, illuminating the playful flow of the current and the ever-present mass of lilies from Laguna de Bay. The scene was so beautiful I almost forgot that the river has been biologically dead for at least two decades. I thought of the last scene in "Noli Me Tangere," where Ibarra stealthily makes his way up to the lake, hidden under a cover of cogon, in a boat piloted by Elias.

I admired the scene for a minute or two, and then started pedaling toward home again. Gotta get in shape. Only two weeks left.

C. Childers, 29, is a freelance filmmaker from Colorado who has called the Philippines home for almost three years.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

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'Disgrasya'

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'VE seen a couple of advertisements on TV that have been bugging me a little lately. Both seem hugely successful. Both are by PLDT.

One is its NDD (national direct dial) ad, which has this student calling up his father in the province to tell him something important. The boy wants to change his course from medicine to fine arts, and he doesn't quite know how to tell his father about it. Apparently, it is his father's wish that he follow in his footsteps. After some faltering and hesitation, the boy finally manages to get his sentiments across. The father is taken aback initially, and looks about to expostulate. But suddenly he sees pictures of him and his son on the tabletop, and remembering the bond between them over the years, slowly relents. He smiles, and in a kindly voice tells his son it's up to him. Whatever he chooses to do, he says, he'll have his support. The boy whoops it up.

The second one is PLDT's IDD (international direct dial) telephone ad. It's the more popular one, and features the ongoing story of a mother and her presumably *unico hijo* in the United States. The mother, a resolutely doting one, keeps calling her son up in the United States to inquire about his welfare. He tells her that he has met a nice girl, named Gracia, who is probably a Fil-Am to go by her name. The mother worries no end about the girl being too American, but her son keeps assuring her she will meet with her approval. As the story goes, the son eventually tells her mother she is going to marry Gracia and is going back to the Philippines to introduce Gracia to her. The subplot to the story is that the boy's best friend, who turns out to be gay and has the hots for him, is devastated by the news.

Come the day of the return, the mother scans the passengers anxiously for Gracia. She espies a girl who is on the loud and frilly side, and catches her breath. But happily it is not her. Gracia emerges from the crowd, a simple demure girl and a most beautiful one. "*Gracia nga*," the mother sighs in relief. The boy's gay best friend, who is lurking in the shadows, bangs his head on a post.

I know these ads depict situations, or dilemmas, that are fairly common in this country. And I know that their treatment is lighthearted, particularly the second one. But I don't know if they don't encourage unsavory values, even if these values are traditional and deep-seated. The comedic aspects could only serve to make them look more attractive. I know filial piety is a good value to have. But I don't know that in its excessive form, it isn't a bane that's better worth banishing.

In the first ad, it's all very nice that the father eventually relents and discovers the worth of love over obedience. But you wonder why he had to insist that his son become a doctor in the first place. Again, I know that that happened a lot in our feudal past, and probably still happens a lot in our feudal present. Though more among the upper middle class and the so-called "*buenas familias*" (so-called because the nobility, as someone said, is generally characterized by the lack of nobility) than among the poor—the poor are glad just to have a family member enter college. Though poor parents are also insistent, often explicitly, that their children take on a "useful" course, one that prepares them for a useful trade, than anything related to the arts. I've seen a real life version of Billy Elliot, a poor boy who loved dancing who was eventually forced to become a cop. But that's another story.

To go back to the ad, the father eventually relents and accepts his son's decision to take up fine arts, which is where his heart lies. But why that decision has to have his approval, I can't imagine. Why his bond with his son must depend on his blessings for the life he chooses, I can't imagine. The happy ending is still weighed down by that baggage. You want to say, "Why in God's name did you want him to follow in your footsteps, to begin with? What do you want, a clone? You want him to consult you too on who he should marry?" It's all ego, and the myth of perpetuity. It subverts individuality, it subverts responsibility, it subverts freedom. You won't find the true challenges of democracy in the big things, you'll find them in the small ones. In everyday life.

Talking about consulting parents on whom to marry brings us to the second ad. It's cute, it's interesting, but it also brings out nagging thoughts. Chief of them, why in God's name the son should show he hasn't stopped being a Filipino even while in America by sinking to such depths of subservience. Or why in God's name he must try to please his mother by making sure his future partner would meet with her approval. It's his life—and not quite incidentally, his future partner's.

While at this, as someone pointed out in the gay forum we had at PRESS, this is the stereotypical way gays are portrayed in media, including ads. As people to make fun of, as comic reliefs, as deviant and perverse individuals we laugh at rather than with. The depiction of the gay character in the PLDT ad is a case in point, he said.

I like irreverence as much as the next fellow. I know humor cannot always be politically correct. But I think we ought to balance this too with a little more sensitivity to sensibilities.

And finally, so what if Gracia turned out to be the loud, baubled, gum-chewing "gel" (as they use to pronounce it in the old Tagalog movies)? It's not the boy's mother who's going to live with her; he is. Like the other ad, the happy ending is weighed down by baggage. The resolution lies within a context that says it's God's grace to bring home a wife mama will swoon over. What if Gracia turned out to not be the ravishing beauty she is? What if she turned out to be, well, aesthetically challenged, as the politically correct put it? Indeed, what if she turned out not to be fair-skinned but a dark woman from the American barrios? Would her mother have said "*Disgrasya*"?

That people should think in this way—that is the real *disgrasya*.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

Women speak out on ROTC and CMT

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

SOME TIME in June, I wrote about the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) and took a stand that it should be reviewed, together with its high school equivalent, the CMT (Citizens' Military Training). Within a next few days after the article appeared, I received a total of 68 e-mail about the article, with only four supporting the retention of these courses.

Most of those against the ROTC talked about corruption. One man said he graduated from one of Manila's universities in 1960 and that this was already a problem in their time. So much for the myth that the ROTC deteriorated only in recent years.

Several of those who wrote in said they were not able to graduate from college because they refused to take the ROTC. This included one of my best students at the University of the Philippines, whose grade point average would have qualified him to graduate cum laude. It's mind-boggling when you think of the time wasted not just with the ROTC weekend drills but also in terms of all these people who never got their diplomas simply because they did not fulfill the ROTC requirement.

Why this aversion to the ROTC? Some readers brought up the point about the ROTC and CMT representing militarization and that this was a form of forced conscription, which is usually found only in authoritarian regimes. A good point: in many countries that do require some kind of military training, people can be exempted on religious or ethical grounds and render community service instead.

By far the most number of letters protesting against the ROTC and CMT focused on the aspect of harassment and bullying from the officers. It seems the ROTC and CMT no longer have anything to do with imparting defense skills. They're really like frats that harass their neophytes. Some readers even suggested that some of these officers actually have psychological problems, people with inferiority complexes who try to compensate by assuming a position of authority in the ROTC and CMT and then intimidating the cadets.

It's interesting, too, how gender issues emerge in this ROTC debate. The INQUIRER printed a letter from someone suggesting that those who opposed the ROTC were probably from the "weaker sex."

Let's hear then what women have to say. Only three women wrote me about the ROTC: two against and one in favor. One of those opposed said the ROTC is undemocratic. Annette Eufemio, on the other hand, pointed out that while women are at least exempted from the ROTC, which she considered "an irrelevant waste of precious time," they still have to go through high school CMT, and she thinks that should be abolished as well. Annette explained why:

"I recall with disgust the hours we spent on this useless exercise back then and the tyranny that is unleashed in our young and impressionable minds. As early as third year high school, we had to make the decision on whether we wanted to be part of the officers' corps in our senior year. 'Voluntarily,' we committed ourselves to a year of mindless training from our seniors to equip and qualify ourselves to be part of this elite officers' corps...this usually took the form of petty errands, from fetching their lunch to braiding their hair, to more harassing ones such as being made to squat for long stretches under the sun for minor infractions like failing to salute a senior officer.

"It was horrifying to see otherwise wholesome and God-fearing young ladies (coming from an exclusive Catholic school) turn into overbearing and sometimes even corrupt pseudo-Fascists. All this was done in the guise of instilling discipline and a sense of duty—good and sound values yes, but dangerous ones when distorted and entrusted to people still too young and just processing and distilling their own values. We should have been trained more in independent and analytical thinking rather than mindless and automatic obedience, community and voluntary service over imposed servitude, teambuilding and sportsmanship over elitism, humility over arrogance."

Annette finished high school 15 years ago and now worries that her daughter, who has just started school, will have to go through the CMT.

I can see why Annette is worried. Look at this letter I got from another reader, who called herself Carina Ramos and used arneljulio@hotmail.com as her address.

"Your article is founded on ignorance and it is not hard at all to picture you as a person. Probably feminine, unintelligent, can't do a push up and devoid of character. Your article reflects this of you. In fact, what you wrote amounts, at best, to journalistic masturbation. An intelligent person will examine issues from various points of view before arriving at a conclusion—you didn't. 'Probably' is not a substitute for careful scrutiny of facts. All-encompassing characterization of ROTC officials and programs from all schools is a sign of indiscretion and lack of thought.

"Don't bother responding, this is a temporary e-mail account I created just to let you know that I am one of many (I'm sure) who saw your article and sighed, 'What an IDIOT.' Pleasure yourself."

Poor cowardly Carina, ready to hurl obscenities only because she thought she had an e-mail address that could not be traced. (It can but why bother with low life?) I did want to say I considered her "accusation" of my being feminine as a most flattering compliment: the world's enough of a mess with the likes of Carina and ROTC officers trying to outdo each other with their macho bullying.

Alas, Carina's pathetic letter only supports suspicions of people like Annette Eufemio and myself that institutions like the ROTC and CMT aren't just useless but most harmful in the way they warp the minds of Filipinos and Filipinas. With defenders like Carina, the ROTC and CMT are lost causes.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org

LETTERS

Misimpressions and misperceptions

ALTHOUGH critical of my role as minority leader of the Senate, I am deeply honored by the two successive editorials that your newspaper ran on July 29 and 30.

The editorials have forcefully reminded me of, at least, two things: (1) that even as I am now cast in an adversarial role relative to the administration, I should not forget "my roots in principled opposition"; and (2) that if I do not clarify things, misimpressions may override the truth of what I am honestly trying to do.

Despite the misimpressions, may I assure you that I will always do what needs to be done for the welfare of our country. I think that my life in politics—from the Marcos years up to this point—is a sufficient guarantee that I will not sacrifice the welfare of the people for any self-serving motive to enhance my personal or my family's interests.

I am sorry that my direct answers to questions by your colleagues in the press seem to have created the perception that I am acting out of base motives when I criticize certain irregularities in the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

If I talked about the need to stamp out *jueteng* in Pampanga the other day, for instance, it was by way of citing a specific example of how the government may credibly combat a source of graft that has destroyed the Estrada administration and may plague the Macapagal administration.

It is not true, as your second editorial suggests, that this is the first time I have mentioned *jueteng* in Pampanga and elsewhere as an evil that should be addressed decisively by the government. I have done so in many forums—before and during my Senate presidency but unfortunately the statements did not merit prominent mention in newspapers like yours.

If I said that the President might have to testify on what you say is "the growing Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. scandal," it was in answer to a question of whether or not she might have to be summoned by the Senate. I did add that I won't file a resolution to investigate the so-called scandal unless I have strong evidence in my hands against the culprits, not to make a good "sound byte" as your editorial suggests but to state a principle that we, in the Senate minority, will be a responsible, not an irresponsible, opposition.

If I was not too clear on that point, then, I must—and do—apologize.

Neither is it true that it is only now after I lost the Senate presidency that I am critical of the administration. Even when I was the Senate president I had occasion to disagree with the President and I said so publicly. Among other things, I took issue with her appointment of Cabinet secretaries who had pending criminal cases or who should probably take other less sensitive posts. I took the stand that it was illegal for the President to order, through the police and military officers, the arrest of people without warrants. I said that the President was ill-advised to issue a proclamation on the state of rebellion in Manila. I disapproved of her decision not to include a Muslim candidate for the Senate in the May 14 elections. In the negotiations with the Muslim rebels of Mindanao, I said that she should offer something substantial so that the cause of the recurrent uprisings in central and southern Mindanao may be dissipated and peace and development may become tangible realities on the island.

And when I said that the President's Sona reminded me of "Joe de Venecia on the campaign trail," the statement was not about her "style of presentation," it was about "substance." Unfortunately, your colleagues in the media focused on the reference to De Venecia and they hardly paid attention to our advertence to the fact that "at bottom, what we want to know from her is where the money for all those grandiose plans would come from."

Finally, congratulations for your editorial cartoons of July 29 and 30. The cartoons portray graphically what we, as members of the Senate opposition, have vainly tried to say all this while about the Macapagal administration but apparently without much success.

I am sorry for the length of this reply. I would have wanted to keep it short but for the need to clarify the impressions that your two editorials might have created in the minds of your readers that were not meant either by my acts or statements as minority leader.—**SEN. AQUILINO Q. PIMENTEL JR., 6th Floor, Senate of the Philippines, GSIS Bldg., Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City**

Generals urge reforms in ROTC

THIS is with reference to the efforts by some university officials to remove the Reserve Officers Training Corps from the curriculum.

The compelling legal and moral considerations supporting the institution of the ROTC program in our country far outweigh the passionate reaction of some well-meaning sectors of our society. The abolition of the ROTC will unjustly blot out the distinguished service rendered by ROTC graduates in the government and in various sectors of our society, and put in vain the acts of those who offered the supreme sacrifice before the altar of freedom.

ROTC graduates constitute about 80 percent of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Philippine National Police officers corps and they continue to give their commensurate share in the various levels of leadership as commanders and staff officers of units engaged in counterinsurgency, anti-secessionist and police operations and socioeconomic development in both rural and urban areas. A sizeable number hold star rank.

The Association of General and Flag Officers (Agfo) strongly condemns any form of irregularity in the ROTC program and abhors the killing of a cadet from the University of Sto. Tomas whose idealism and courage instilled as an ROTC cadet caused him to lose his life. It is along this singularly courageous act of an ROTC cadet that Agfo strongly advocates that instead of the emotion-driven proposal for the abolition of the ROTC program, appropriate and far-reaching reforms should be forcefully carried out. These reforms must be designed to adequately respond to the dynamic challenges and requirements of this millennium.—**ERNESTO S. GIDAYA, (ret.) brigadier general, Armed Forces of the Philippines, chair/president, Association of General and Flag Officers, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City**

Sugar-coated poison

WE strongly condemn the decision of the Macapagal administration to privatize the local rice trade by liberalizing the importation of rice.

Once again, we reiterate that dependence on imported rice will not ensure our country's food security. The people can see the truth in this and will not allow it without protest.

Liberalized rice trade will drive farmers to bankruptcy since rice imports will kill local production and dictate the local prices of major crops.

President Macapagal is deceiving farmers by saying small farmers can also import, for we very well know that poor farmers cannot even produce enough capital to plant rice for their own consumption.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is set to release a $175-million loan facility if the government is able to privatize the local grains sector and the quantitative restrictions (QRs) on imported agricultural products are lifted.

Farmers think Ms Macapagal's remedy to their poverty is much like sugar-coated poison.

We will not be a party to Ms Macapagal's State of the Nation Address promises and remedies as she is evidently pursuing the opening up and the total sell-out of our economy in compliance with the policies and schemes of globalization.—**PABLO ROSALES, secretary general, Pambansang Katipunan ng Makabayang Magbubukid, 59 Imperial St., Cubao, Quezon City**

Dangerous fences at CCP

I WOULD like to appeal to those in charge of the grounds in the Cultural Center of the Philippines. My brother and I usually go there to rent bicycles and exercise on weekends with our family. I have seen some kids getting injured because of the sharp metal fences in the parking lot.

I hate to think what would happen if these kids would be thrown off their bikes and get speared by these sharp fences. Please do something to avoid these horrible accidents.—**MIRABELLE CAGAWAS, Grade 3, St. Theresa's College, Quezon City**

A reformer at the helm

WE, the undersigned, current and former employees of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC), are deeply concerned that our former president, Vitaliano Nañagas II, is the subject of incredible allegations of incompetence and mismanagement. We have remained silent, hoping that things would improve after his new colleagues got to know him better. But we have now to speak up as the PDIC has been cited as "embarrassed to have been associated with an incompetent and disgraced former employee" in a manifesto of some protesting Social Security System employees.

We vehemently take exception to this claim. On the contrary, it was under Nañagas' leadership that corporate pride flourished and commitment to public service became more deeply inculcated in the PDIC. We believe in his unquestionable integrity, high moral standards and unconditional commitment to the pursuit of the public good—qualities that make him an effective reformist.

The PDIC experienced reform pains under him, what with the new challenges he posed; the long work hours he demanded and the hectic deadlines imposed; the accountabilities associated with problems uncovered; the seemingly destabilizing initial effects of new systems and procedures; and, the massive training program, including technical courses that were made mandatory—all focused on enhancing productivity and promoting high ethical work standards. He hired some key people, many of whom, inspired by his vision of public service joined and stayed with the PDIC, despite the low compensation. But at the same time he developed the potentials of people and promoted from among the ranks.

Nañagas led us through a memorable six years where corporate vision was crystal clear and was shared throughout the ranks. We attribute mainly to him the PDIC's financial turnaround; its extensive human resource development program; the legislative reforms that empowered the PDIC to better manage its risks and better provide protection to small depositors; its much improved information technology (we have benefited from an e-mail system since 1993); its internal control system, formal policies and procedures for all major areas of operation; and, a much improved working condition.

We continue to thank him for our transformation both as an institution and as individuals, and through this letter, we hope to correct the serious misinformation currently circulating.

We are confident that the deep sense of commitment to quality public service will unite SSS employees and their chair toward putting behind the past and moving forward to better serve the needs of SSS members.—**WITH 97 SIGNATORIES**

The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

WORLDBRIEFS

Palestinians bury dead in W. Bank

NABLUS, West Bank—Angry Palestinians fired guns into the air and called for revenge yesterday as thousands of mourners poured into the streets of Nablus in a noisy funeral procession for eight Palestinians killed a day earlier in an Israeli helicopter raid. The huge crowd surrounded the bodies as they were removed from the Nablus hospital and carried through the streets on stretchers, covered with Palestinian flags. Women and children screamed and cried. Many waved green flags of the radical Palestinian group Hamas, whose offices were the target of Tuesday's assault. "We will not stop our uprising," Anan al-Atiri, a spokesperson for the Fatah movement of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, said at the funeral. "I think the coming days will be worse than before." *AP*

New mass grave in Bosnia

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina—The Muslim Commission for Missing Persons yesterday began exhuming another mass grave site containing the bodies of at least 25 missing Muslims, officials said. According to the deputy head of the commission, Jasmin Odobasic, the mass grave was found near the Serb-held town of Rogatica, some 40 km east of the capital, Sarajevo. The victims were believed to have been killed by Bosnian Serb soldiers at the beginning of the 1992-95 war. During the war, an estimated 200,000 people, mostly civilians, were killed and more than 20,000 people are still missing and presumed dead. *AP*

China arrests suspected US spy

BEIJING—A Chinese-born American writer detained in China has been formally arrested on charges of endangering China's security, a US diplomat said yesterday. Wu Jianmin, detained in April, was arrested May 26 on charges of "collecting information that endangered state security," said Mark Canning, spokesperson for the US consulate in the southern city of Guangzhou. Formal arrest moves Wu one step closer to a trial, though he still would have to be formally indicted. *AP*

Hopes of finding survivors fade

KUANG FU, Taiwan—Hopes of finding survivors buried in the rubble left by Typhoon "Toraji" faded yesterday as rescuers struggled to dig through layers of mud quickly drying into hard packed soil. Rescuers have already found 72 bodies swept away by landslides and floods, and about 140 people were still missing since the storm lashed eastern and central Taiwan on Monday. Soldiers with shovels and workers with earth-moving construction equipment went back to work yesterday, lifting boulders and clearing away the debris that slid down mountainsides and covered homes, temples and cars. *AP*

Warning up on 'Code Red'

WASHINGTON—The viruslike "Code Red" worm has not reared its head again yet, but federal officials monitoring Internet traffic say they won't know for sure that the Internet clogger hasn't returned until next week. The original Code Red worm took seven days to hit its stride, according to Alan Paller, director of research at the SANS Institute, a computer security think-tank. "We don't know yet whether we are safe and we won't know for sure until seven days pass with no major disruptions" said Paller, who was helping the FBI monitor the Internet. "We never expected to know whether there was a problem today." *AP*

'Largest prison for journalists'

BANGKOK—A Burma government spokesperson professed bewilderment yesterday at charges by an international press freedom group that the country's military regime detains journalists in brutal conditions and tightly restricts freedom of information. In a report issued Tuesday, the Paris-based group Reporters Without Borders described Burma as "the largest prison for journalists in Asia." It urged that international sanctions be maintained against the military government until 18 jailed journalists are released and censorship is eliminated. The United States and European Union countries limit diplomatic and business contacts with the regime in disapproval of its poor human rights record and failure to hand over power to a democratically-elected government. *AP*

German gays to exchange vows

BERLIN—Germany's gays can exchange vows at partnership ceremonies and receive some of the same rights as heterosexual marriages under a new law that went into effect yesterday despite fierce opposition from some conservatives. The first ceremony—complete with wedding rings—was taking place in Hanover early yesterday, one of many planned across the country to celebrate the end of a decades-long struggle by gay rights groups to bring Germany into line with countries such the Netherlands and Sweden. "For gays and lesbians in Germany it's a huge step forward after a long battle," said Volker Beck, a prominent lawmaker from the Greens party, which has fought for the new legislation. *AP*

64 killed, hundreds missing in Indon slide

JAKARTA—Torrential rains triggered massive landslides burying houses and killing at least 64 people on a remote Indonesian island, government officials said yesterday.

The landslides struck on Tuesday after days of heavy rain on the island about 100 km off the northwest coast of Sumatra, said Abdurrahman Nasution, a local government official.

Nasution said that rescue workers were on their way to Sambulu village in the island's mountainous interior, where at least 62 people were reported dead.

Police officer Lt. John Meliala said up to 800 residents could not be accounted for. However, they could have taken shelter on high ground above flood waters, he said.

Meliala said there were two more landslides in the south of the island, near the town of Telukdalam, killing two people.

The officials said more than 100 houses were destroyed and hundreds of other homes damaged. Villagers were searching through the mud and rubble for survivors.

Hendrik Gulo, another government official in Nias's main town, Gunung Sitoli, said 28 bodies had been recovered so far and transported to a hospital.

He said two rivers had burst their banks and flooded the surrounding countryside. Much of Sambulu village was still under water yesterday although it had stopped raining.

"With so much flooding, we are worried some bodies may be swept out to sea," he said.

He said authorities had sent emergency food aid to the region, including 50 sacks of rice and noodles.

Three earthquakes—measuring between 5.3 and 5.4 magnitude—were recorded near Nias island on Tuesday, the Meteorology and Geophysics Agency said.

It was not clear whether the temblors, centered in the Indian Ocean about 700 km southwest of Nias, had contributed to the disaster. *AP*

KIM IN SIBERIA AP

North Korea's reclusive leader Kim Jong-il visits a tank factory and library in Omsk Wednesday after emerging from the train carrying him across Russia's vast expanse for a rare full-day stopover in western Siberia.

US, South Korea to stage full-scale military exercise

SEOUL—In a move that is certain to anger North Korea, South Korea plans to hold a full-scale joint military exercise with the United States this month as scheduled, Seoul officials said yesterday.

The exercise, code-named Ulchi Focus Lens, has been conducted annually since 1976 to train soldiers, especially senior officers, for war on the Korean Peninsula.

South Korea and the United States characterized past exercises as defensive, but North Korea denounced them as a rehearsal for a northward invasion.

Following a historic inter-Korea summit in June last year, South Korea drastically scaled back that year's Ulchi Focus Lens two months later in a gesture aimed at further easing tenion with North Korea.

But inter-Korea ties cooled this year amid tensions between the United States and North Korea and there is no prospect that the stalled dialogue would resume anytime soon.

Army Maj. Ha Ju-heon, a spokesperson for Seoul's defense ministry, confirmed published local news reports that this year's Ulchi Focus Lens would be conducted in late August without any of its programs cut back.

Details of the exercise, scheduled for Aug. 20-31, will be announced next week, he said.

The exercise is largely a computer-simulated war game but it also involves amphibious landing and river-crossing drills and mobilization of Army reservists.

In last year's Ulchi Focus Lens, the Seoul government eliminated troop movements and conducted the exercise only on maps and computers.

The Ulji Focus Lens exercise in 1999 involved 14,000 US soldiers stationed in South Korea and 5,400 others brought from the US mainland, Japan and Guam, along with 56,000 South Korean troops. *AP*

New wave of protests hit Argentina

BUENOS AIRES—Thousands of state workers and jobless people blockaded highways across recession-stricken Argentina on Tuesday, protesting an unpopular government austerity plan.

The protests were the latest outburst of rising social tensions as Argentina slides into a fourth year of recession marked by unemployment of more than 16 percent. One out of four Argentines are living below the poverty line.

The road blockades came a day after the government won congressional approval to implement deep spending cuts in public worker salaries and pensions to trim the growing budget deficit. The roadblocks were scattered across more than 40 cities, blocking key highways and snarling rush-hour traffic.

In downtown Buenos Aires there was chaos around the domestic airport when an airline union cut off the road, though flights went ahead as scheduled.

In Florencia Varela, 30 km south of the capital, hundreds of protesters stormed a local branch of the provincial bank, occupying the building for most of the afternoon until the leaders of Tuesday's demonstrations personally intervened, asking the group to disperse.

Other incidents occurred in Cordoba, where two policemen were slightly injured during a confrontation with workers from Cordoba's energy company, who were protesting the planned privatization of the enterprise.

Elsewhere in Cordoba—Argentina's second biggest city—students, professors and unemployment workers cut roads in the city in their own protests against government policies.

In the working-class neighborhood of La Matanza on the outskirts of the capital, dozens of pickup trucks blocked the main highway leading into Buenos Aires, snarling traffic and prompting commuter chaos.

Hundreds of protesters—from children of unemployed parents to public health workers—waved banners and banged drums, denouncing the government's economic plan and accusing the government of "betraying the people."

Union leader Luis D'Elia told the demonstrators—many of them decked out in colorful bandanas and waving Argentine flags—their target was the government. *AP*

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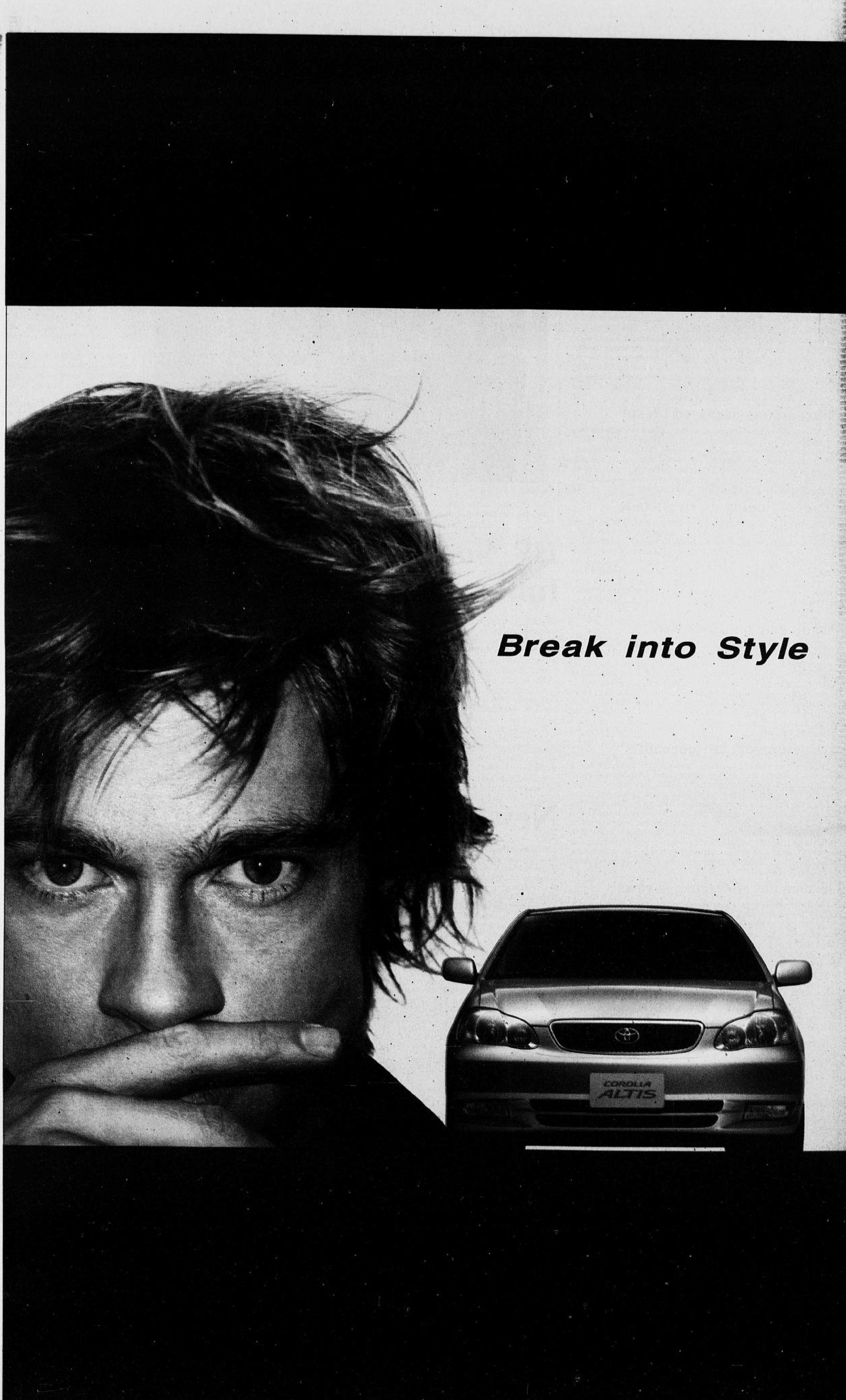
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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northwestern Luzon and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Baguio	Cloudy	Hi 23° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 25°
Laoag	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 26°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 26°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray leyesa, PDI Research/08/02/01

ROUNDUP

11 NPA rebels surrender

LEGAZPI CITY—Eleven New People's Army rebels and 17 of their supporters surrendered to the Armed Forces Joint Task Force Mayon last week. Government troops also killed an unidentified communist rebel and captured two of his companions in Sitio Hapnit, Ragay, Camarines Sur, said Army Maj. Jose Broso, head of AFP's Civil Relations Group (CRG) in Bicol. Captured were Matias Rafael Din of Quezon City; and Teresito de la Peña of Ragay. He said the surrender was facilitated by Lt. Richie Jay Bisco of the CRG during a routine civil relations activity in Barangay Bololo, Guinobatan, Albay after an armed encounter with rebels where two government soldiers and a woman rebel were killed. *Roly Embile and Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

1 dead, 5 hurt in mishap

VICTORIA, Laguna—A person died and five others were injured in a vehicular smash-up at 10 p.m., Sunday, in Barangay San Francisco here. This brought to four the number of vehicular accidents along the provincial road here in July alone. Insp. Quiterio C. Peria, town police chief, identified the dead victim as Noseriano N. Ardeza, 59, driver of the tricycle involved in the accident. Ardeza, whose tricycle was smashed and dragged up to about 80 meters, was killed on the spot, according to a police report.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Visayas business confab

TAGBILARAN CITY—About 300 business leaders from the Visayas are expected to converge here on Aug. 3-4 for the Visayas Area Business Conference. Fifteen participants from Metro Manila are expected to attend the conference that will be held at the Bohol Tropics Resort Club. Among the guests invited to grace the occasion are Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor, Tourism Undersecretary Oscar Palabyab, Land Bank of the Philippines president Margarito Teves and Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Miguel Varela. Loreto Palapos, Bohol Chamber of Commerce and Industry president, said the conference would include discussions on the economic crisis affecting the country and Southeast Asia.

Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

Village official shot

KALIBO, Aklan—A lone gunman shot and wounded a village official following an altercation Tuesday night on Boracay Island. Nestor Pelayo, a barangay councilor of Manoc-manoc, was rushed to the hospital after he was shot in the right chest allegedly by Francisco Dalisay about 7:30 p.m. in Sitio Tulubhan, Barangay Manoc-manoc. The Boracay Police Assistance Center arrested Dalisay shortly after the shooting. Police investigators said Pelayo was driving his tricycle in Barangay Manoc-manoc when waylaid by the suspect shortly after the two had a heated argument.

Odon S. Bandiola, PDI Visayas Bureau

Anti-illegal drugs drive

DIGOS CITY—Mayor Arsenio Latasa ordered a renewed anti-illegal drugs campaign after he confirmed that the city has become the transshipment point of illegal drugs to Southern Mindanao. But he said the use of a vigilante group is not needed as police and other agencies could easily do the job with the help of the people. Latasa said illegal drug use in the city has apparently spread because of the users' easy access to drugs. "Drug pushers are sealing their transactions in the city," he said.

Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau

De Oro power rates lowered

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The Cagayan de Oro Electric Power and Light Company is set to reduce its power rates by 30-centavos per kilowatt-hour, two months after it reduced rates by 20 centavos. The move came after the Energy Regulatory Board approved the National Power Corp.'s resolution reducing the power rates by 30 centavos per kwh for residential consumers as mandated by the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001. Lordilie Saligumba-Enhambre, Cagayan de Oro Chamber of Commerce manager, welcomed the power rate reduction. She said they would also file a petition seeking a power rate reduction for commercial consumers.

Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Registration resumed

DAVAO CITY—The Commission on Elections resumed its voters' registration after it was suspended on Dec. 27. All Comelec city and municipal offices, except those covered by the Aug. 14 plebiscite on the proposed expansion of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, will accept registration applications from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday. The Comelec will only accept birth certificates, driver's license, school IDs, employees' IDs, postal IDs, passports or any authentic documents for identification. Barangay certification and community tax certificates will no longer be accepted.

Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Bohol traders join fray vs Cebu trial of Sayyaf

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—Businessmen in Bohol have joined Cebu leaders in opposing a Supreme Court ruling transferring to Cebu from Zamboanga the trial of cases involving suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits.

"We don't like it (the SC decision to hold the trial in Cebu)," said Loreto Palapos, president of the Bohol Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (BCCII).

Protests against the court ruling also came from Rep. Rodolfo G. Plaza.

In a statement, Plaza said the transfer of the trial would scare away investors from Cebu.

"Cebu is an established trading center. It's more than just a sense of duty and obedience to the Supreme Court that should matter," his statement said.

Although the BCCII had yet to come up with an official position on the issue, Palapos said most Bohol businessmen were opposed to the transfer of the trial to Cebu.

Although Bohol is an hour and a half away from Cebu by ferry, businessmen here are worried that the trial of the Abu Sayyaf bandits will be held in the major Central Visayan city.

"Tourists will soon start to believe that the Abu Sayyaf is also present in Cebu," Palapos said.

He said the transfer would affect the tourism industry in the region because Cebu and the rest of the Visayas will later be equated with the Abu Sayyaf.

Considering the role that tourism plays in the regional economy, Palapos said he "strongly believes" the Council of Visayas Chambers will issue a position opposing the move making Cebu the trial venue.

The council, a group of chamber presidents, has 11 active members from different provinces in Western, Central and Eastern Visayas.

Palapos said the issue would also be taken up during the two-day Visayas Area Business Conference in Tagbilaran City on Aug. 3-4.

"I am very sure that will be mentioned," Palapos said, referring to the trial venue controversy.

Government and business leaders in Cebu have formed a "united front" to oppose the Supreme Court ruling.

Sen. John Osmeña filed before the high tribunal on Tuesday a motion for reconsideration for the change of venue.

A separate "united manifestation" will be sent to the Supreme Court by Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia, Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña and other top government and business leaders in Cebu.

The manifestation was supposed to be submitted to the High Tribunal yesterday but it did not push through because Mayors Osmeña, Thaddeo Ouano of Mandaue and Arturo Radaza of Lapu-lapu City had not signed the document, an aide of Governor Garcia who asked not to be identified said.

The aide said the manifestation will be sent to the Supreme Court once these mayors sign it.

The resolutions from the Cebu provincial board and city councils of Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-lapu and a position paper from the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and industry will be attached to the manifestation.

Garcia said the manifestation will focus on three points—security problem and lack of detention facility should the Abu Sayyaf members be brought to Cebu for the trial; and the negative impact on tourism and investments should the trial be held in Cebu City. *With a report from Tonton A. Antogop, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Medical aid from Saudi 'leftovers'

COTABATO CITY—Health workers in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao expressed gratitude for the multimillion-peso worth of hospital equipment and medical supplies donated by Saudi Arabia but commented that most of them are "discarded and worthless materials."

Nurses, doctors and other health personnel of the autonomous government lamented that Saudi Arabia, one of the richest nations in the world would donate "their leftovers, most of them worn-out, that needed major repair."

"Even if we have them repaired, I doubt if the needed spare parts are available since most, if not all, are European or British-made equipment," a Maguindanao medical practitioner, who asked not to be named, said.

"It would be ungrateful for us to be identified as complaining recipients since these were just given to us," he said.

"It is degrading on our part to become a dumping ground of scrap from (an) oil-rich country like Saudi Arabia," a female nurse commented after seeing some of the rusted knock-down parts.

Dr. Jainal Hamad, health regional secretary, has confirmed that most of the donated pieces of equipment, including 20 power generators are "second hand."

Hamad said the donated items include X-ray machines, ultra-sound, blood-chemical analysis apparatus, sterilizer, incubator, pediatric and orthopedic equipment.

Hamad credited ARMM Gov. Nur Misuari's efforts in soliciting foreign donations for his constituents.

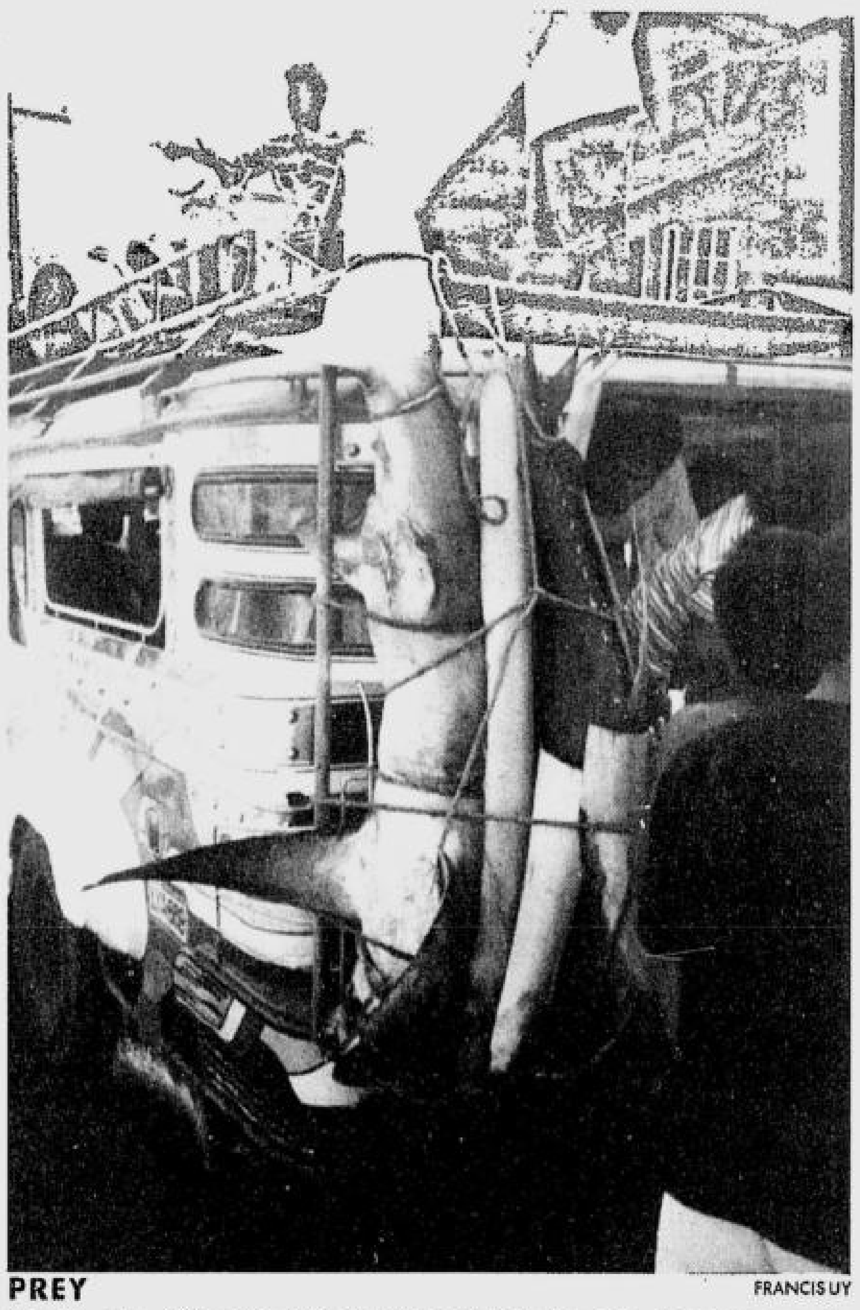
The Saudi donation was shipped in five container vans passing through Davao City, where a formal turnover of this pieces of equipment by Saudi Embassy officials to Misuari was held.

Hamad said a repair crew from the Department of Health in Davao will determine whether this donated equipment is still serviceable.

"If the amount for the repair and spare parts would be bigger than (the cost of) having to buy a new one, we might as well abandon the idea of restoring (the donated pieces of equipment)," Hamad said.

All usable pieces of equipment will have to be distributed among the 25 ARMM hospitals, based on the guidelines that the DOH regional office has prepared.

The installation of this equipment, according to Hamad, would improve the delivery of various health services to the people of ARMM, considered the poorest region in the country. *Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



PREY FRANCIS UY

Sharks, one of the most feared predators in the sea, becomes prey to fishermen who catch the species for their fins and meat. The trade in shark is hectic, especially in Butuan City, where sharks are loaded into jeepneys for delivery to the city's market.

Vietnamese robbed, killed

DIFFUN, Quirino—A Vietnamese businessman, believed to be a robbery victim, was found dead in a remote part of Barangay Diego Silang here on Monday, police said.

Chief Insp. Ronald Gayo, town police chief, identified the victim as Hoang Hunh Tran, 24, a Vietnamese and resident of Dubinan West in Santiago City, 20 km from here.

His body was discovered at 6 p.m. Monday inside his gray Mitsubishi L-200 pickup that was parked along a dirt road leading to a rice field here.

Gayo said Hoang, who was engaged in the money lending business, died of stab wounds in the chest and cheek.

Police said Hoang was robbed after his relatives in Santiago City told investigators that his black bag, which usually contained his cash collection, was missing.

Witnesses said around 5:30 p.m. on Monday, they saw a man get out of the vehicle and walk away carrying a black bag. Police said the bag could be Hoang's.

Police said Hoang's body was found in the front passenger seat.

"This would indicate that the suspect may have driven the vehicle prior to the killing," Gayo said.

Hoang was reportedly on his way home after collecting payments from his clients in Cabarroguis town.

Police also found Hoang's identification certificate issued by the Center for Assistance to Displaced Persons Inc., signed by one Bishop Ramon Gilles.

The document stated that Hoang was "officially registered to be under the responsibility of CADPI," and recorded his arrival in the country on June 4, 1989.

Immigration officials in Santiago City, however, failed to locate Hoang among the aliens registered with their office.

Gayo theorized that Hoang could have been among the Vietnamese refugees who were previously granted entry into the country. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

No witness found in holdup of 10 South Koreans

By Odon S. Bandiola
PDI Visayas Bureau

KALIBO, AKLAN—Five days after 10 (not nine as earlier reported) South Korean tourists were robbed on Boracay Island, police here have yet to find the armed suspects who staged the heist on Thursday.

Police raided on Friday an abandoned warehouse close to the holdup site and arrested two men but there were no witnesses or pieces of evidence that could link them to the July 26 holdup.

Edgar Escano, the driver of the van owned by the Lorenzo Villas resort, told police that neither of the two men were the ones who poked a gun at him during the holdup.

The South Korean tourists were on their way back to the Lorenzo Villas around 8 p.m. after spending the day at the beach when three armed men stopped a van driven by Escano and divested the tourists of their cash and valuables.

Escano also told police he could not identify the two robbers who entered the van and took the valuables of the tourists since he was ordered not to move by the third robber who poked a gun at his face.

Police here, however, said they believed that the two persons they arrested—Lino Daguno and Ulysses Sualog—were the ones who perpetrated the holdup.

But police also admitted that there were no witnesses who could link the two suspects to the crime.

The police's only chance of finding the perpetrators would be to have the victims identify the robbers. However, the South Korean victims have all gone back to their country. They left Boracay a day after the holdup.

Without any witnesses, police was forced to free Daguno on Saturday. But the police held Sualog as he was caught with a sachet of shabu and an unlicensed .45-cal. pistol.

Sualog was charged with illegal possession of a firearm and prohibited drugs on Monday.

CATCH PHOTO COURTESY OF PHILIPPINE ARMY

Col. Danilo Lim (second from left) presents to reporters an alleged New People's Army rebel who was captured during an encounter between Lim's troopers and rebels in Camarines Sur July 29. The government soldiers also seized firearms and communist documents during the encounter.

4 dioceses to host historic retreat for clergy, pastors

THE ARCHDIOCESE of Lipa and the dioceses of Lucena, Boac and Gumaca, Quezon are hosting the first regional clergy retreat and pastoral consultation Aug. 6-10.

The event will feature homilies and talks by Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Antonio Franco, Lipa Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, Manila auxiliary Bishop Teodoro Bacani, Calapan Bishop Warlito I. Cajandig, Infanta Bishop Julio X. Labayen, Lucena Bishop Ruben T. Profugo and Boac Bishop Jose F. Oliveros and Fr. Antonio Palang and Fr. Chito Tagle, rector of the Tahanan ng Mabuting Pastol Seminary.

Around 300 priests from the South Luzon Tagalog Region (SOLTARE), except those from Gumaca and Infanta, will converge in Lipa, the venue of the regional assembly.

The Spiritual Plenary Assemblies will be held at the Carmel Church while the Pastoral Plenary Assemblies will be at the De La Salle-Sentrum.

Participants will be housed in four religious and retreat houses according to their years in the ministry (pastoral grouping) where small group sharing and common prayer time are scheduled.

This will give everyone a chance to interact and exchange pastoral experiences.

Archbishop Franco will be the main celebrant at the opening Mass on Aug. 6, 5 p.m., at the San Sebastian Cathedral. His homily will deal on "Rediscovering Priestly Identity and Idealism in the Changing Philippine Society."

Msgr. Rosales, Archbishop of Lipa, and proponent of this regional assembly, will deliver a talk on "The Priestly Lifestyle and Spirituality."

He will also be the main celebrant at the Misa ng Bayang Pilipino on Aug. 10, 11:30 a.m., at the De La Salle-Sentrum. His homily on "Christ Celebrating with His Priests the Life of Communion" will cap the four-day reflection on this regional assembly.

The lay faithful, headed by the papal awardees of the Archdiocese of Lipa, will join Mass at the opening and closing ceremonies.

ILOILO FRACAS

Anti-ROTC rally attacked; more violence feared

By Nestor Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Students calling for the abolition of the Reserved Officers Training Corps here raised fears of a possible crackdown from school administrators and ROTC officials following a violent dispersal of an anti-ROTC rally Monday.

At least two students were manhandled when security guards, police interns and ROTC officers shoved protesters inside the University of Iloilo (UI).

Apple Gabasa, 18, was dragged by two police interns and pushed by security guards until she was outside the campus. Another student, Rex Tupas, 22, said he was grabbed in the neck by the school's security chief Rodolfo Vasquez.

Vasquez and the head of the faculty union, Melvyn Ybarzabal, nearly came to blows after Ybarzabal interceded to prevent guards from harming the students.

"They were taking pictures of the protesters and using physical force," said Ybarzabal.

Vasquez, who also confiscated a megaphone from a member of the League of Filipino Students, refused to issue any statement to reporters.

The protest erupted after Ariel Diaz, the candidate of the Paghamon Party for president of the student council, was prevented from speaking in a grand rally for all the council candidates.

Paghamon is one of the three political groups vying for seats in this year's elections for the student council today.

The university's commission on election disqualified Diaz for violating the student poll body's policy prohibiting candidates from discussing the ROTC issue during the weeklong election period.

Bobbie Reyes, dean of student affairs and election adviser, said the ban was enforced to avoid conflict between candidates and officers of the ROTC who were deputized to ensure orderly elections.

But Diaz said the policy violates their right to express and campaign for their beliefs especially during the election period.

"The Comelec has no right to dictate our platform of government. They cannot be above the Philippine Constitution," Diaz said.

Vasquez and the dean of discipline, Benigno Casio Jr., who are both retired colonels in the military, ordered the dispersal after supporters of Paghamon unfurled placards and urged students to walk out of the school.

"They have a right to hold protests but they were clearly disturbing the program," said lawyer Eduardo Reyes, legal adviser of the university's poll body.

Around 700 students shouting "martial law *sa* UI!" later held an hour-long noise barrage and rally in front of the gates of the university.

Lorna Gaton, vice president for academic affairs, said the administration would talk with all the political parties to prevent more protests.

Founded in June 1947 by former Philippine Vice President Fernando Lopez, UI is one of the biggest universities in Western Visayas with around 8,000 students.

NGO hits approval of GMO tests

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—A Church-based group has assailed the municipal government of Tampakan in South Cotabato for allowing the field testing of genetically altered Bt-corn.

Monsanto Philippines, a multinational seed company, conducted the crop tests in Barangay Maltana in Tampakan early last month after its request was approved by town officials in a resolution.

Sis. Susan Bolanio, executive director of the Justice and Peace Desk of the Diocese of Marbel in Koronadal City, said no public consultation was conducted before the municipal council passed the resolution.

Bolanio said the field testing violated the guidelines issued by the National Commission on Biotechnology in the Philippines (NCBP) requiring the project proponent and the concerned local government unit to hold public consultations before any tests of genetically modified organisms are made.

He also noted that the area where the genetically altered crops were planted exceeded the 1,000-sq m experiment site set by the NCBP.

The Justice and Peace Desk is strongly opposing the entry of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the South Cotabato-Sarangani-General Santos area.

Residents of Maltana have the right to know the adverse effects of this kind of crop to their health and environment, Bolanio said.

American multinationals are promoting the worldwide use of GMOs amid warnings that these products of biotechnology could be bad to human health.

GMOs could also lead to monsters in the form of plants or animals that have uncommon characteristics, critics warned.

Protests against GMOs were well-publicized in Europe and the United States where the organisms were given the tag "Frankenfood," after the legendary movie monster Frankenstein.*Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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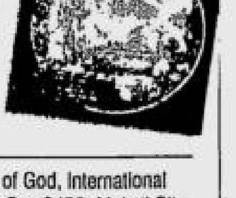

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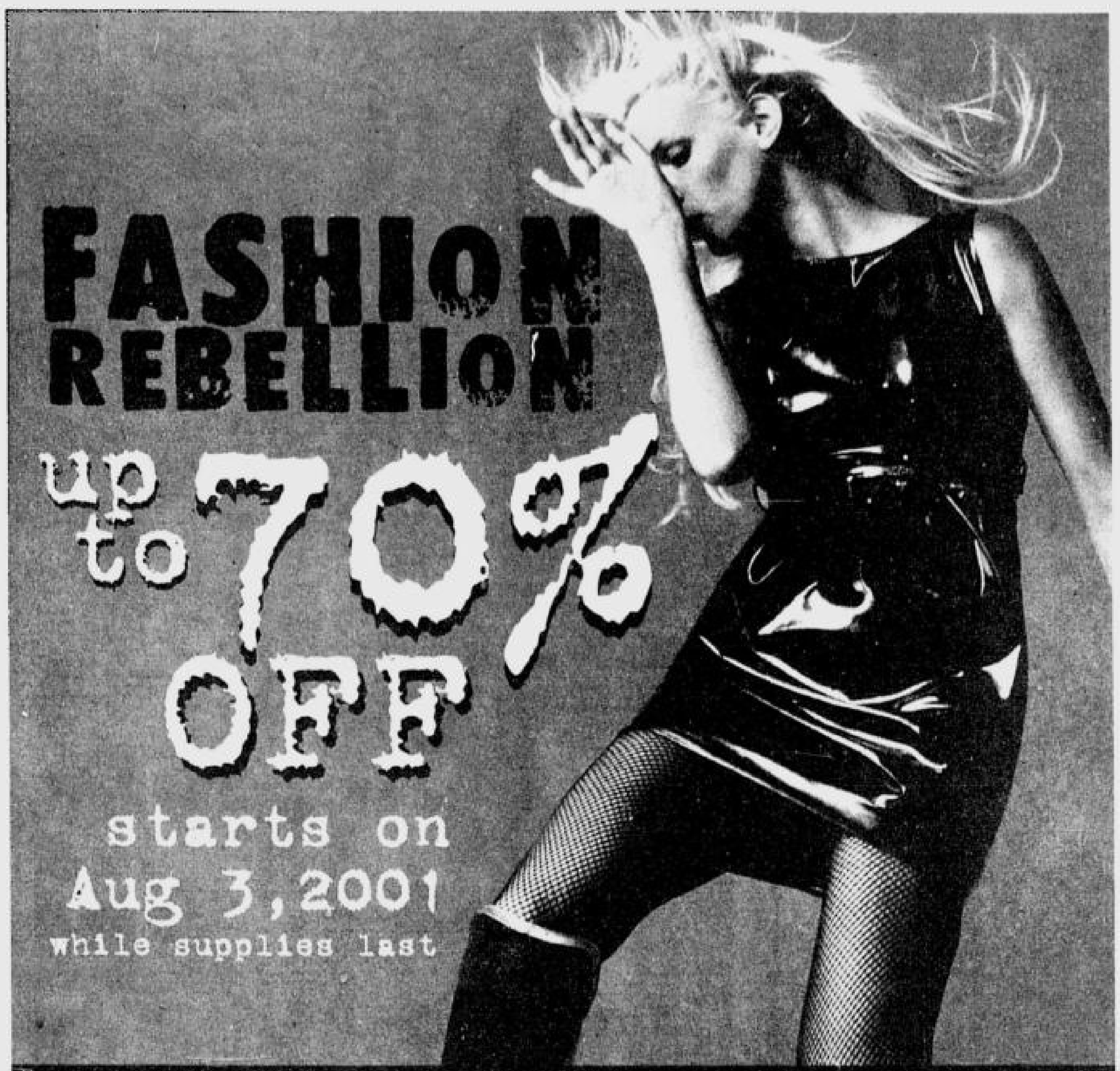

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20 rebels attack Quezon hacienda

LUCENA CITY—At least 20 communist New People's Army rebels attacked the farm and burned the house of a landlord in San Francisco town, Quezon province yesterday morning.

A report of the Armed Forces Southern Luzon Command based in Camp Guillermo Nakar here said the NPA guerrillas staged an early morning raid on the fishpond-hacienda of one Willy Matias in Sitio Bunsoy, Barangay Casay, leaving behind three wounded hacienda workers.

The wounded were identified as Illuminado Acinas, Rolando Hudog and Roger Urbando.

The report said the workers put up a fight that lasted for about five minutes.

The rebels also seized one M-14 and one M-16 rifle and several rounds of ammunition.

Arson

Before leaving the place, the rebels burned the house of Matias, who was not around during the raid.

A police intelligence report said the rebels were only after Matias' firearms.

"Since the soldiers took the task of augmenting the lack of policemen in remote municipalities, the NPA no longer attacks police stations. They shifted their focus instead to the cache of firearms believed being maintained by landlords for self-protection," a police intelligence officer told the INQUIRER.

"The NPA is now again replenishing its armory, possibly to launch more and bigger attacks," the police official said.

The NPA guerrillas had already victimized several undermanned police stations in far-flung areas in the past, taking off with the stations' meager firepower.

Revolutionary tax

The landlord was also believed to have problems maintaining his regular contributions to the rebels' progressive taxation, said the report.

Elements from the 416th PNP provincial mobile group and the AFP 74IB were conducting hot pursuit operations in the hinterlands of the Bondoc Peninsula.

Prior to the suspension of the peace talks, police and military intelligence reports claimed that there was a concentration of NPA guerrillas along the coastal villages of Tayabas Bay up to the Bondoc Peninsula.

The information said the communist guerrillas were "escapees" from the "intense clearing operations" being undertaken by the military in Oriental Mindoro.

Also reported was the "unusual" frequency of NPA sightings in the Bondoc Peninsula and the Polillo-Real-Gen. Nakar-Infanta area in the northern part of the province.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is scheduled to visit San Francisco's neighboring town of Buenavista today.

But there is no word yet if it will be cancelled because of the attack. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

WANTED: GOOD SAMARITANS

3 Clark toxic waste victims need help

MAGALANG, Pampanga—Lawrence Libanan, 2, is a little less than five kilos because of his congenital heart disease. Michael Pili, 4, has a big, hard lump in his right cheek. Marilou Simbulan, 23, has an excessively enlarged stomach as a result of ovarian cancer.

They are the most recently documented sick persons among Mt. Pinatubo victims who took refuge at the Clark Air Base Command (Cabcom) evacuation center, where toxic substances were confirmed present, the People's Task Force for Bases Cleanup said.

The two boys were conceived and born at the Cabcom, a former motor pool located near a firing range. At the center, their mothers drank, bathed in and used what later turned out to be contaminated water during their pregnancy and breastfeeding periods.

Simbulan lived at the Cabcom for five years. Like nearly 20,000 families who lived at the center, she derived water from pumps there.

In late 1999, the defunct Mt. Pinatubo Commission closed the center to avert the further exposure of evacuees to toxic contamination.

Brunt

The three persons, however, continue to bear the brunt of the government's move to convert a portion of a former United States military base into a refugee camp.

Their caregivers—parents, grandparents and neighbors at the Sta. Lucia resettlement site here—said they are not giving up yet on the three.

They stretch what little available funds there are, mostly from loans or donations from relatives, to allay their sufferings.

But resources are direly too limited from the circles of poor supporters, Libanan's mother Janet told the INQUIRER.

Too much fluid

Sponsors are needed now to help the three overcome or at least ease their ailments, Myrla Baldonado, PTFBC executive director, said.

Doctors supporting the PTFBC said Libanan and Pili need surgical operations. Simbulan is on top of the PTFBC's emergency cases. She urgently needs chemotherapy.

"She's got too much fluid in her abdomen. Her chances to live will be down to two months if she does not get chemotherapy soon," said Galatea King, a public health student from the University of Michigan doing volunteer work for PTFBC at Sta. Lucia.

"Like the families of the sick, we're still groping in the dark on who would support them because we have other patients in Clark and Subic," Baldonado said.

Baldonado said the three newly documented victims are not just statistics.

Toxic legacy

"They continue to add to the human face of toxic waste contamination by the United States military," she said.

Any financial help—big or small—are welcome through the PTFBC office. Donors may contact Mandy Rivera at the PTFBC office on 27th St. Porac Avenue, Madapdap resettlement site in Mabalacat, Pampanga or call telephone number (045) 332-4367.

The US government continues to refuse to acknowledge its toxic legacy in the two bases that it left behind in the Philippines—Clark in Pampanga and Tarlac and Subic in Zambales.

Efforts to lobby with the US government to compensate victims of toxic wastes in the two former US bases have been futile.

The Philippine government also refuses to actively pursue demands for compensation from the US government.

The US air force abandoned Clark at the height of the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo in July 1991.

Homes in the base were looted following the hurried departure of the American troops.

In 1992, the Philippine Senate rejected a treaty with the US, which would have extended the stay of American troops and war materiel in Subic until this year.

Following the rejection of the treaty, the Philippine government transformed Subic and Clark into economic zones.

Another treaty, the Visiting Forces Agreement, replaced the junked bases pact.

Access

Militants described the VFA as a more alarming version of the bases treaty because it allows US forces access to more ports in the Philippines.

But the protests failed to block the ratification of the VFA by the Philippine Senate under the administration of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

Several persons, most of them children, had died as a result of diseases believed to have been caused by toxic wastes left behind in the two former US bases.

The campaign to have the US compensate these victims or their families has fallen on deaf ears.

Most of the toxic waste victims had to resort to begging for help from Good Samaritans to get by their treatment or medication.

Some groups, like Baldonado's, have extended assistance to the victims and brought them into contact with donors and officials who were willing to help. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

NO END TO RAPE

GAUDENCIO AUDIE L. DE LA CRUZ

There is no costlier lesson to learn than a tragedy that claimed human lives. But despite all the deadly floods that have killed thousands and that were blamed on indiscriminate cutting of trees, logging continues, especially in the Sierra Madre mountain ranges. This truck just came from the mountain range, traversing a river with its cargo of precious trees.

Ilocos needs ₱2B to repair 'Feria' damage

SAN FERNANDO CITY—The Ilocos region, which suffered the brunt of typhoon "Feria" last month, needs at least P2 billion for its rehabilitation programs, especially in infrastructure and agriculture, the Regional Development Council here said yesterday.

During the council's quarterly meeting, Regional Director Leonardo Quitos Jr. of the National Economic and Development Authority said almost 90 percent of the damage in Ilocos was on infrastructure. The rest was on agriculture.

Unless repairs are made soon, the Ilocos region will continue to suffer from price increases in the next months, Quitos said.

It was learned that P879 million would go to the rehabilitation of damaged irrigation facilities, including small water impounding projects, shallow tube wells and small farm reservoirs.

Funds for damaged roads and bridges and major flood control structures totaled P596 million.

Ilocos Sur would require P666 million for its rehabilitation program; La Union, P406 million; Ilocos Norte, P278 million; and Pangasinan, P241 million.

For the agriculture sector, at least P21.58 million is needed to rehabilitate damaged crop areas, support poultry and livestock projects, and restore damaged fisheries infrastructure.

Quitos said Feria, the most destructive typhoon to hit the Ilocos region, caused a loss in the productive capacity of the regional economy.

However, he said while agriculture may have suffered a setback, it was only temporary.

But with other pressures like the increase of oil and power prices, he warned that inflation in the region would hit double digits this year.

The rehabilitation of main roads and bridges like the Quirino Bridge in Santa, Ilocos Sur, must be given priority to allow the flow of goods and services, he said.

At present, commuters are being ferried across the Abra River either by barges, rubber boats or bamboo rafts. *Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

TV host tells rumor-mongers: Leave me alone

DAVAO CITY—A local TV show host here denied she was the woman rumored to be involved in the "Burlesk King Scandal" allegedly involving her and Davao Rep. Prospero Nograles.

"This is the first, the only and the last time that I will talk to the media regarding this issue," Jeanette Lomanta-Leuterio said in a press conference at the Grand Men Seng Hotel here yesterday.

Leuterio denied she was the woman allegedly "caught in the act" with the congressman in a five-star hotel in Manila.

"I now categorically deny any involvement in the Burlesk King-caught-in-the-act stories because they never happened," she said.

Nograles, through his lawyer, also denied he was the one being referred to as the "Burlesk King," who was allegedly told to run naked at the hotel.

The rumor was spread through text messages some three weeks ago. It was later featured as "blind item" stories in various local dailies here.

The stories include Leuterio being shot by her husband, Maj. Leo Angelo Leuterio.

But a radio station here later named Leuterio and Nograles. A taped radio commentary on the issue was presented before the press conference as evidence that the station did identify them.

"Those who appear to be responsible for all these malicious fabrications and scandalous journalism must answer," Leuterio said.

The malicious story, Leuterio said, had her entire family especially her three children suffering. Even her weekly program "Labs ko si Mommy" aired over ABS-CBN-Davao, has been off the air since last week.

She said her clients started to distance themselves from her while product endorsements have been put on hold or even cancelled by her advertisers.

"My career as a TV host has probably ended. My livelihood is gone," she said.

She claimed to have separated from her husband.

"He has abandoned our children. I would have thought that he would stand by his family and protect our marriage from this scandal," she said.

"I appeal that you please respect my privacy and allow my children and I to pick (up) the pieces of (my) broken marriage and wrecked family," she said. *Jeffrey M. Tupas and Anthony S. Allada with a report from Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Church takes up GMA dare to give property

BY ESTANISLAO CALDEZ
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

TUGUEGARAO CITY—If rich landlords could only follow this bishop's example, poor farmers would be able to till their own lands.

Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan of the Tuguegarao diocese here set a good model for other dioceses when he distributed some 50 hectares of Church-owned agricultural land to 36 landless farmers in Barangays San Isidro, San Francisco and Masical in Baggao town, the hotbed of communist rebels.

Talamayan said he initiated the transfer of Church-owned land titles following an appeal from President Macapagal-Arroyo in her State of the Nation Address for the Church to help lick poverty.

"Do not sell these lands because these are for you and your children and children's children," he told the farmers in a simple ceremony at the Archbishop's residence.

He said former bishops in Cagayan bought the lands to support 130 seminarians who are children of poor Cagayanos.

This was to encourage residents to enter the seminary due to a lack of priests in the province.

"We gladly give (the lands) to you so you can rise from poverty. It is only the beginning. We will look for some Church lands in other towns and distribute them," Talamayan said.

The bishop appealed to rich Cagayanos to follow suit if their lands are idle but warned land grabbers and those who manipulate the agrarian reform law.

For his part, Abrino Aydinan, Department of Agrarian Reform regional director, promised to go to Baggao to look into the support services his office can extend to farmers.

"The act of the Church here has given more meaning to the second part of the implementation of the DAR program," he said.

1ST IN MINDANAO

Davao hospital to conduct kidney transplant

DAVAO CITY—On Aug. 10, the Davao Medical Center (DMC) here will make history—performing the first kidney transplant in a government hospital in Mindanao.

The move will also be considered a breakthrough, giving the poor access to kidney transplant operations.

"This is the first of its kind in the history of Mindanao, the first step in providing transplant for the poor," said Dr. Franklin Galiano.

A kidney transplant in private hospitals here costs around 350,000. At the DMC, it will only cost P250,000.

A team of six physicians, with National Kidney Transplant Institute Director Eugene Ona as head surgeon, will be flying in from Manila in time for the scheduled operation on Aug. 10.

The DMC will have 10 doctors who will assist the medical team and possibly learn from the experience.

Dr. Gerardo Cunanan, DMC's chief of hospital, said they have to train their personnel and improve their equipment and facilities because they want to provide kidney transplant operations for the poor on a regular basis.

"We plan about three to four transplant operations by the end of the year but we first need to organize," he said.

Cunanan said at the DMC, about a hundred patients need kidney transplant.

Armelyn Arsagon of Tacurong, North Cotabato will be the first kidney transplant patient.

Arsagon has been undergoing dialysis treatment for more than two years now. Her twin brother, Arthur, will be the kidney donor.

Galiano said Arsagon need not worry about the cost of the operation since there are sponsors who are willing to shoulder her expenses.

"She will only have to worry about the medicines. (Medicines in) the first three months will cost P30,000 but that will be reduced to just P80 a month eventually," Gallano said.

The success rate for people who undergo kidney transplant operation with a compatible organ from the donor can be as high as 95 percent. *Joel Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Vice mayor linked to poll candidate's murder

BY MA. DIOSA LABISTE
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The incumbent vice mayor of San Joaquin town, 50 kilometers south of here, was implicated in the slaying of mayoral candidate Jesus Sibya Jr. and the wounding of his driver three days before the May 14 elections.

Vice Mayor Marilyn Silfavan was named accessory in the murder and attempted murder cases filed at Branch 67 of the Regional Trial Court in Guimbal town, 29 km south of here.

Silfavan was then the running mate of then reelectionist town mayor Sebastian Serag, one of the principal suspects in the killing of his rival.

Serag lost his reelection bid to Daisy Sibya, the widow of Jesus, who took over her husband's candidacy a day before the election.

In an amended information involving the murder of Sibya, the office of the provincial prosecutor named Silfavan as an accessory, three drivers all surnamed De La Cruz as accomplices and 13 others as principals.

Two suspects, Serag and Balabago barangay chief Lino Napao, are now detained at the Iloilo Rehabilitation Center.

The amended information was filed July 30.

A witness, Evelyn Esmajer, a rice cake vendor, said in her sworn statement that she saw one of the suspects, identified as Rodolfo "Tikboy" Talanquines, alight from a motorcycle in front of Silfavan's house and give her a long firearm covered by an Army jacket and a handbag.

4 eyed as new SSS chief

(From page A1)

PRESIDENT Macapagal gets her new driver's license in less than 30 minutes during the launching on Wednesday of the LTO informational technology process.

JOAN BONDOC

Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for the President, said the "peace formula" would be announced "most probably" today. He said Camacho was working out the so-called formula.

"There are certain aspects of the solution that would have to be confirmed with certain individuals, the executives of the SSS and even the union," Tiglao said.

SSS officials said that the state agency was "ready" for new leadership and that they would throw their full support behind whoever would be named to head it.

Aurora Ortega, SSS vice president for the National Capital Region, said the career executives saw no problem with a change in leadership.

"We are trained to support the management, and we will work willingly with whoever the President appoints to the agency," Ortega said at the Fernandina Forum in San Juan.

She also said it was "business as usual" in almost all SSS offices, but according to reports, 90 percent of the employees and 85 percent of the executives were behind the demand for Nañagas' ouster.

"If it's true that the President will replace him, then so be it," SSS vice president for public affairs Susie Bugante said of Nañagas, a banker and former president of the Philippine Stock Exchange.

"I'm sure whoever the President will appoint will continue the reforms initiated by Nañagas," she said.

But both Ortega and Bugante said they saw nothing wrong with Nañagas' management style.

"He's doing a good job," Bugante said, adding that the protesters had no legitimate ground for seeking Nañagas' ouster.

The SSS has supposedly sought the help of the Civil Service Commission, Office of Government Corporate Counsel and Philippine National Police to settle the dispute.

"For every employee who doesn't want to go back to work, there are four people who would take the job. That's the state of employment in the country now," Bugante said in an apparent warning to recalcitrant SSS workers.

Militant support

At the SSS central office in Quezon City, members of the rival labor alliances Sanlakas and Kilusang Mayo Uno arrived to lend support to the protest action.

Also present were representatives of other militant groups, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) and Pamalakaya.

While the protesting SSS employees limited their demand to Nañagas' ouster after Malacañang shelved the privatization plan, the militant groups continued to raise the issue.

Bayan Muna Representative-elect Satur Ocampo said that while Malacañang and even Nañagas had denied the privatization plan, the government was bent on pursuing this in another form as it had already made a commitment to the World Bank-International Monetary Fund.

Bayan secretary general Teodoro Casiño described Nañagas as the "leading agent of privatization" in the SSS, and said he should be booted out of office.

"The issue is not just between SSS employees and Nañagas but a public interest issue that should be given a closer look," Casiño said, adding:

"The national government thinks it can get away with privatization simply by giving it new names such as 'reforms,' 'outsourcing' and 'joint-venture.'"

KMP chair Rafael Mariano said there was no truth to the claim that the SSS was hiring foreign consultants "to improve profitability."

"The employment of foreign consultants is in preparation for the corporate takeover of the SSS," he said, adding:

"There must be a black-and-white agreement that Malacañang will shoot down the privatization of the SSS and will not send thousands of rank-and-file employees out of job. We cannot take its word at face value."

Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon said the government was obsessed with selling the SSS to corporate clients at the expense of the agency's 23 million members.

He said that as a P165-billion institution, the SSS had enticed "foreign vultures and interlocking directorates of corporate greed."

Shutdown in Luzon

In Baguio City, SSS Luzon cluster manager Luis Olais yesterday ordered a shutdown of operations in 10 branches and said these would remain closed today should Nañagas ignore the demand for his ouster.

Olais said Nañagas had been preaching reforms that SSS employees had interpreted as his "very own privatization agenda."

"What reforms? He never explained any of these reforms?" Olais told the INQUIRER. "He never even convened a planning session (when he assumed office), and we were only introduced to his concept of out-sourcing, which simply meant that he is hiring consultants to manage P181 billion in SSS-contributed funds. But he never even explained the criteria for financially managing these funds. So what reforms is he talking about?"

Olais froze operations in SSS branches in Bangued, Abra; Bontoc, Mt. Province; Laoag City, Ilocos Norte; Vigan City, Ilocos Sur; San Fernando City, La Union; Solano, Nueva Vizcaya; Santiago City, Isabela; and Tuguegarao City, Cagayan.

Close to 80 employees barricaded the regional office in Baguio at 8 a.m. yesterday, and spent time explaining their action to SSS claimants.

"We are not usually militant. We are just government employees serving from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. But we are learning to be militant, to march in the streets (for the sake) of the SSS members. In fact, we have started memorizing the SSS hymn. We never liked it, but now we realize this is our song," said Dr. Gertrude Dominguez, SSS regional physician.

Only the SSS office in Cauayan, Isabela, opened for a few hours yesterday before stopping operations.

Olais said the manager, Estrella Aragon, wanted to check on any civil service rule that a shutdown might violate.

Aragon linked up with Bontoc manager Abe Yogyog and Bangued manager Macario Katipon Jr. and joined the walkout of the Movement Against Privatization of SSS, the local employees' group.

"We were scared by threats of sanctions on rallying employees. Nañagas already filed charges against the officers of Access," said Rogelio Atos, lawyer for the Luzon cluster.

Olais said the employees were uncomfortable with Nañagas' TV interviews on Monday and Tuesday wherein he boasted of reform plans that "they had never even heard of."

"Is Nañagas saying they are reforming the SSS because of corruption? Then why zero in on the countryside branches when most of the investments that he called graft-ridden were made by the Manila office?" Olais said.

He was referring to SSS loans that financed the Centennial Expo Filipino and ousted President Joseph Estrada's "behest investments" in the gaming firm Belle Corp.

SSS workers in Malolos, Sta. Maria and Baliuag towns in Bulacan were ecstatic when they began receiving text messages starting Tuesday night that Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin would supposedly ask the President to replace Nañagas.

Employees at the Meycauayan branch wore red and black shirts or ribbons to support the clamor for Nañagas' ouster.

"We were assured by higher-ups that our problem would be solved because of the concern expressed by Cardinal Sin so that we could go back to our jobs," said Meycauayan branch manager Pabliza David.

SSS workers in Quezon and Laguna are also in support of the protest action against Nañagas.

In Pampanga, Senior Supt. Reynaldo Berroya, Central Luzon police director, ordered all provincial and city police directors in the region to provide security to SSS offices in their areas.

Berroya issued the order on Nañagas' request.

Walkout in Visayas

SSS operations in the cities of Bacolod and Iloilo were badly affected when employees walked out of their offices yesterday morning.

The processing of SSS claims in Iloilo was suspended after 32 employees walked out at 9 a.m., said branch manager Raul A. Casiano.

A few of the protesting employees returned to the office but refused to work, leaving 10 contractual employees to serve SSS members.

The employees, wearing black ribbons and armbands, also hoisted placards and streamers at the entrance of the branch office on Rizal Street.

Members of the Confederation of Unity, Advancement and Recognition of Government Employees (Courage) supported the protest action.

Yesterday's protest was the third in a week. The Iloilo employees also walked out on July 26 and 30.

"We will continue our protest until we receive notice from our superiors," Casiano told the INQUIRER.

About 100 employees of the Bacolod branch joined the walkout, said the protesters' spokesperson Sheila Vasquez.

She said they were joined by 40 employees of the branches in Sagay, Victorias, Bago, Kabankalan and San Carlos cities in Negros Occidental.

The protesters gathered in front of their office on Lacson Street where they held a rally calling for Nañagas' resignation.

Only 10 employees were left to attend to clients at the Bacolod branch.

In Cebu City, more than 50 employees held a rally in front of their office on Escario Street during their noon break. The protesters, who were dressed in black, originally planned to stage a second walkout but Helen Solito, SSS cluster head for Central Visayas, advised them to continue working.

"Let us be sober in approaching the issue," Solito said. "We do not have to think of ourselves alone. We must not sacrifice our services to the people. Let us continue working."

The employees first walked out on July 30.

Lockout in Mindanao

In Digos City, the "lockout" staged by SSS employees and officials drew mixed reactions.

"I have been a member of the SSS for more than seven years now and this is the first time I had this experience. I believe the demands of SSS employees and officers for the removal of Nañagas is justified because they will not do this if it is not," a businessman who requested anonymity told the INQUIRER.

Digos branch head Lito de Leon admitted that some SSS members were disappointed by the disruption caused by the lockout, but said Nañagas continued stay in office would compromise the future of the agency.

De Leon said 11 employees had agreed to serve only disabled SSS members.

Although SSS employees and officials, being government workers, are barred by law from joining protest actions or strikes, De Leon said they were firm in their decision to do so.

How about rights of 23M SSS members?

(From page A1)

continue to make do with the meager benefits doled out by the state agency?

These questions arose yesterday at the SSS central office in Quezon City as workers and executives went full steam with a work stoppage to compel Malacañang to replace Vitaliano Nañagas II, the agency's president and chief executive officer.

Rodolfo Dulay, 61, traveled all the way from San Leon in Pangasinan to inquire about his delayed retirement pension.

The senior citizen made the four-hour journey for the P3,000 check, and had to go home empty-handed. But unlike Falcon, he did not mind.

"I do not agree with the planned privatization of the SSS, so I support the protesters' cause," Dulay said.

Like the hundreds of other SSS members who went home frustrated yesterday, Dominador Saldana of Dagat-dagatan, Caloocan City, said he was now preparing for "dark days" ahead.

"I badly need the check I'm supposed to get from SSS today (Wednesday). I'm afraid Meralco will cut off our electricity because that check was intended as payment for our bill," Saldana lamented.

The protest action, which started as a "sit-down" strike during lunch break two months ago, was initially launched to denounce the government's plan to privatize the SSS.

When Malacañang announced that it had shelved the plan, the employees directed their efforts to seeking Nañagas' ouster, citing his supposed poor management style.

But the SSS members interviewed by the INQUIRER yesterday said the employees should not have come this far.

"The issue is just between Nañagas and the employees. They should have settled it between themselves and not involved the public in their dispute," the members said.

Leaders of the union, the Alert and Concerned Employees for a Better SSS (Access), apologized to the members for the "temporary setback" brought about by the protest action.

Access president Carol Basilio said the protest action would in the end benefit the SSS' 23 million members.

"Even our lawyers told us that going on strike is illegal. But we are more concerned with how to save the SSS from a person like Nañagas," he said.

In Davao City, protesting workers said they were ready to face sanctions.

No one, not even the contractuals, reported for work at the SSS branch yesterday. Members were advised to pay their dues at the banks.

SSS executives requested that a bank teller accept premium payments under the acacia tree of the SSS compound.

Boxes where members could drop salary loan applications, sickness and maternity claims, retirement claims, complaints and requests for manual verification were provided.

As early as 6 a.m. yesterday, Davao City union members led by Abraham Matuco, together with members of militant groups, gathered outside the gates of the SSS compound.

A prayer rally was held at 8:30 a.m. and a noise barrage at noon.

"This is the first time that we are doing this against a person. The very first time that SSS workers held a strike was during the signing of the (collective bargaining agreement) years ago. I really hope this will end," said Evelyn Sayon, SSS assistant vice president for Southern Mindanao.

She said Nañagas has caused demoralization among employees.

Eddie Jara, SSS Vice President for Mindanao, said that they support the clamor of the SSS union for the ouster of Nañagas.

Sadness

In Lucena City, SSS branch manager Corazon Villamor expressed sadness over the state of the agency that she had served for the past 43-years.

"This is my last year in the SSS before I retire. It is really painful for me to watch this depressing development," Villamor told the INQUIRER.

She blamed Nañagas for the mess he was in.

"If only the president of the SSS leveled with us, if only he displayed sincerity in his dealing with us, this would not have happened. But he did not. He had this coming," she said.

Villamor said that when Nañagas made them sign the "Covenant of Service," they were told that it was for the enhancement of SSS services to the public.

"But when he made that bulletin, its true aim was to eliminate graft and corruption in the local branches. That's insincerity because we are the local branch and we are not corrupt," she said, trying to control her anger.

Except for the lone security guard, Villamor was alone in the office yesterday. The workers had walked out.

Also in Lucena City, Leody de Guzman, secretary general of the militant Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino, said Nañagas lacked *delicadeza* in insisting on remaining in office.

"The SSS was transformed by workers' mandatory contributions. But what is awkward now is that the voice of the SSS employees calling for the immediate ouster of Nañagas is not being heard or simply being ignored by no less than the President of the republic," De Guzman said in a statement.

"It also appears that Nañagas has forgotten the example set before him when the Filipino people stood and toppled the highest public official, who, aside from having no trace of *delicadeza* in his system, also betrayed the people's trust," the labor leader added. ***With reports from Martin P. Marfil in Manila; Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Jun Malig and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Carla P. Gomez and Rizel C. Sabanal, PDI Visayas Bureau; Allan A. Nawal, Joel B. Escovilla and Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Opposition suspends Bing probe; GMA happy

(From page A1)

supposedly accepted a bribe.

"She's happy that Bing, of course, made that clarification and . . . she is very grateful to her old friend for issuing such a clarification," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said in a press briefing.

"Bing's statement speaks for itself," he also said, reading a prepared statement. "With her clarification and with the Ombudsman's investigation, (the President) hopes that this non-issue will be put to rest, and the political grandstanding over it will cease."

He said that discovering the identity of Rodrigo's source is the job of state prosecutors. "It's up to the Ombudsman now to determine the identity, if (investigators) feel that is necessary," he said.

Indeed, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, who has launched a preliminary inquiry on the order of Ms Macapagal, said he considers Rodrigo's statement "a lead" worth investigating.

Desierto has already instructed subordinates to take Rodrigo's statement in person.

"I told them to approach Rodrigo today. If she has a recantation, I have not seen it . . . What she said is a lead for us," Desierto, speaking in Taglish, told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview yesterday afternoon.

What's in folder?

On Tuesday, Malacañang submitted a folder to the Ombudsman containing documents on the vetoed franchise bills of the two companies at the center of the controversy. *(See related story on franchise bills on page A1.)*

In a news conference yesterday morning, Desierto said the folder contains the "stories of the transactions, the stories of the bills," but did not include an affidavit that the President had offered to submit, detailing the findings of an internal investigation she made for her "own satisfaction."

Justice officials and the President's lawyers had reportedly advised the President not to submit an affidavit lest it be misconstrued as an attempt to influence the outcome of the Ombudsman's inquiry.

Tiglao confirmed that Ms Macapagal would submit an affidavit on the advice of Presidential Legal Counsel Avelino Cruz.

He explained that her "internal investigation" consisted of background checks and would not stand up in court.

"And if you require the presidency to disclose every detail or basis for investigation, you weaken the presidency, you make the presidency a harassed one," he said.

A three-man panel is conducting the Ombudsman's preliminary inquiry to determine whether public officials might have been questionably involved in seeking the reinstatement of the franchises, since Rodrigo implicated at least two unnamed Palace employees in the alleged bribery case.

If public officials are found to be involved, then the Ombudsman has jurisdiction over the case and can launch a formal investigation.

"The fact-finding investigation we will do once we (have established jurisdiction) will be wide-ranging and it can go anywhere," Desierto said.

Changing her mind

After losing a potential witness against Arroyo, some opposition lawmakers want Rodrigo to explain why she has softened her attack on Ms Macapagal's husband, who started the controversy earlier this month by accusing an unnamed resigned Palace secretary of receiving money in exchange for working to have the vetoes lifted.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, ex-President Joseph Estrada's executive secretary during his last days in office, said in an interview that "the witness must explain to the public why she changed her mind" after initially making a "public (and) voluntary disclosure."

Tiglao denied reports that Rodrigo was pressured into modifying her original statement, in which she had used stronger language to accuse Arroyo.

"I think that would be insulting Ms Bing Rodrigo if anyone claims that she was pressured at all by her relatives" to soften her statement, he said.

"I've met Bing Rodrigo in several staff meetings before. That's why I said she is a very independent woman and . . . not the type that can be pressured at all," Tiglao added.

Next move

According to Pimentel, Rodrigo's Tuesday statement has led the opposition to decide to leave the issue alone for the time being. "It's now in the hands of the Ombudsman. We will see what the Ombudsman comes out with," he said in an impromptu news briefing.

"As far as I'm concerned, unless somebody gives us something solid to move forward on regarding this case, we're not going to do anything," he added.

Since Rodrigo "knows nothing directly" of the alleged bribery, the opposition's next move is to seek out Malou Nuñez, a former communication department consultant who followed up on the request for reconsideration of the President's veto, Pimentel said.

Nuñez reportedly identified herself as a friend of the owner of one of the telecom companies when she went to Malacañang last month in June to check on the status of the request.

But Nuñez is believed to be in the United States and it is uncertain whether she will testify, Pimentel said.

"Without Malou Nuñez, you cannot even begin to start with the investigation," he said.

The Ombudsman also plans to hunt Nuñez down to take her statement, Desierto said.

He said his office would then look for "direct sources of information" after taking statements from Rodrigo and Nuñez.

No witchhunt, please

Senate President Franklin Drilon cautioned the opposition against using the Senate as an "instrument for a fishing expedition."

Anybody who has solid evidence of irregularities should present it to his office so that he can refer it to the blue ribbon committee, Drilon said.

But "if there is none, I don't think the blue ribbon should be used for witch hunting," he said.

In a statement, Sen. Ralph Recto said the Ombudsman must continue the investigation, adding that only a clear exoneration would restore Arroyo's honor.

"It will be good if the Ombudsman will declare categorically that we have a First Gentleman who, like Caesar's wife, is beyond reproach," he said, paraphrasing a remark made by the President when she ordered the Ombudsman to investigate the case.

Welcome home

The subject of all this fuss is expected to arrive in Manila this afternoon, as the allegations against him, in this case at least, are starting to fizzle out.

The First Gentleman cut short his 11-day trip by four days, saying his wife wanted him to come back ahead of schedule. He also told a radio station he wanted to "surprise" her by returning in time for their wedding anniversary today.

Airport general manager Edgardo Manda has directed airport security personnel to enforce security measures in case Ms Macapagal decides to welcome her husband at the international airport.

Arroyo is arriving on Philippine Airlines Flight 105 from San Francisco between 3:30 and 4 p.m. today, according to an advisory.

Arroyo went to California for a brief vacation and a medical check-up. In a recent interview from the West Coast, he said he was being treated for bronchitis by a Filipino doctor in San Francisco, and that he had lost five pounds.

His troubles are still not over.

Despite Rodrigo's clarification that she did not have firsthand information about the alleged bribery, she vowed to say "the same thing and be consistent" if asked to testify in a formal inquiry.

But she added that she would not allow herself to be "used by parties who have taken an interest in this issue more for political reasons than for establishing the truth." ***With a report from TJ Burgonio***

Telecom giants . . .

(From page A1)

telecom system.

But the House committee on franchise said it was willing to release for public scrutiny its records, including minutes of hearings, "if only to show that the procedures followed in granting the Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. (PCCI) a franchise was aboveboard, transparent and legal."

Franchise committee chair Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri of Bukidnon said that "it was becoming more and more apparent that there are efforts to divert attention from Malacañang, where the alleged bribery happened, to Congress." ***(See story on bribery case on Page A1.)***

Zubiri also charged that it was "very obvious that major players in the telecommunications industry would oppose any new franchise because they would be direct competitors."

"That's the reason why they (have expressed) strong opposition to the franchise," said Zubiri, a member of the committee in the 11th Congress that deliberated on the PCCI franchise application.

Zubiri added it was "like asking Philippine Airlines if it would agree to allow another airline to operate in the Philippines."

Another former member of the committee, Misamis Oriental Rep. Augusto Baculio Jr., condemned what he called "a vicious campaign to project improprieties in the passage of two franchise bills during the previous Congress."

"The passage of the franchise bills sought by PCCI and APC Wireless Interface Network Inc. were attended with full observance of the rules of Congress and with paramount consideration to the welfare of our people," Baculio said.

PCCI and APC Wireless are owned by Pacifico Marcelo, a businessman with known close ties to Estrada crony Jaime Dichaves.

But at a breakfast forum in Greenhills yesterday, industry players said they did not get any word—official or unofficial, oral or written—from either chamber when the bills were up for review.

Rodolfo Salalima, Globe's senior vice president for regulatory and corporate affairs, said that "at the very least," Congress should have informed the major players that it was discussing franchise applications with potentially "great consequences for the industry."

Salalima stressed that because they were not aware of the bills in the first place, telecom companies could not be accused of lobbying for the subsequent presidential veto of the franchises.

"We were not in a position to lobby for the veto because we did not know about it until it came out in the papers," Salalima insisted.

Rogelio Quevedo, chief of Smart's legal and external relations division, said the Senate and House of Representatives would have known the impact of accepting PCCI and APC Wireless into the industry if they had studied the background of the two companies.

Quevedo said allowing PCCI to operate a clearinghouse for telecom firms to interconnect their services would have established an unnecessary and unwanted monopoly. Under the present system, companies like Globe and Smart interconnect through bilateral agreements.

He repeated the claim of the telecom giants that the presence of an intermediary in the interconnection lines would also jack up the cost of texting, the Internet, hand-held radio and phone communication because the telecommunication firms would have to pay extra for the services of the clearinghouse.

"They can charge 1 centavo or P1 or more, but the point is, anything more than zero is an additional expense, and we, of course, would have to pass on that cost to the subscribers," Quevedo said at the Ferdinand Forum.

But Bayantel, which has interconnection problems, said it did not believe that the establishment of a clearinghouse would establish a monopoly, but added that the intermediary function should not be in the hands of one entity.

Quevedo said that Congress should have at least examined the nature of the companies seeking such allegedly vast regulatory powers.

"It is the duty of the respective committees of Congress to look into the background of the corporations," Quevedo said.

"They cannot say that they have nothing to do with who runs these companies because this is a public service and not everyone can just provide it."

"The name 'clearinghouse' was already a red flag," Quevedo said. "It connotes government authority. The name invites further scrutiny because there is regulatory power and a government imprimatur."

Lacson says Marcos was RP's best leader

He also admires Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew and Pakistan's Pervez Musharraf

IN 1972, a young Constabulary lieutenant named Panfilo Lacson hauled a brawling lothario named Joseph Estrada to jail after a bare knuckle fight with a fellow movie actor over a pop diva.

Former President Estrada is now back in prison over alleged corruption, while his ex-jailor is a newly minted senator. Many Filipinos now see Lacson as a likely challenger of incumbent President Macapagal-Arroyo in the next presidential election.

Lacson, 53, lists senior Singapore leader Lee Kuan Yew, who once ruled the island state with an iron hand, as his role model and even professes admiration for the no-nonsense style of Pakistani leader Pervez Musharraf.

But the newcomer to politics insists it is premature to focus on the 2004 vote. "The political landscape can change very quickly," he said.

When Estrada was driven from office, Lacson quit as his police chief and stood for Congress. He spent the last two weeks of the campaign on the run, accused of destabilizing the new government.

But no charges have been filed and Lacson emerged from hiding to a hero's welcome from supporters. He later had dinner with Ms Macapagal and assured her he would not rock the boat.

The boyish, bespectacled father of three built a fearsome reputation in the services, starting with a stint in an elite paramilitary intelligence unit that hunted down—and allegetly tortured—suspected communist guerrillas in the 1970s.

When Estrada was elected vice president in 1992, he reached out to his jailor of one night and named Lacson chief enforcer of an elite police task force that would wage a bloody war on kidnap gangs. He would repeat the job when his boss became president in 1998.

A year later Lacson was chief of the Philippine National Police. He cracked down on corruption in the ranks, banished overweight officers and made himself known as a "Mr. Clean" who did not take bribes.

But a gambling payoffs scandal brought his boss Estrada down last January.

Filipinos place too much emphasis on the Western concept of individual rights, Lacson argues.

"There is such a thing as a societal approach in dealing with human rights. Take an incorrigible person, so to speak, who is a menace to society. What would you choose, the right of the society to live with peace of mind or the individual rights of that person?"

INQUIRER columnist Ramon Tulfo has since publicly accused Lacson of crimes including pushing people from a helicopter into Manila Bay and stealing from a man killed by his officers.

"Not true," the senator says, describing them as recycled allegations from a since-rehabilitated police officer he had helped send to jail in 1995.

Lacson insists that "in self-defense you can kill," a right, he says, that is enshrined in the Constitution.

"I lost count," he said softly when asked how many people he had gunned down.

The senator alleges there was a "demolition job" against him to deter him from running against Ms Macapagal. "I cannot see any more plausible explanation for what they're doing," he said.

The fourth of seven children of a bus driver, Lacson aspired to become a lawyer but quit college and entered the Philippine Military Academy.

He said he was rarely home and had barely enjoyed a personal life over the past 30 years. He says he mostly ran his household by "remote control."

His office is spare, the only remarkable ornament is a woodcarving of an eagle tearing into its prey.

The senator says the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, who ruled for 20 years until a popular revolt chased him to US exile in 1986, was the best leader the Philippines ever had.

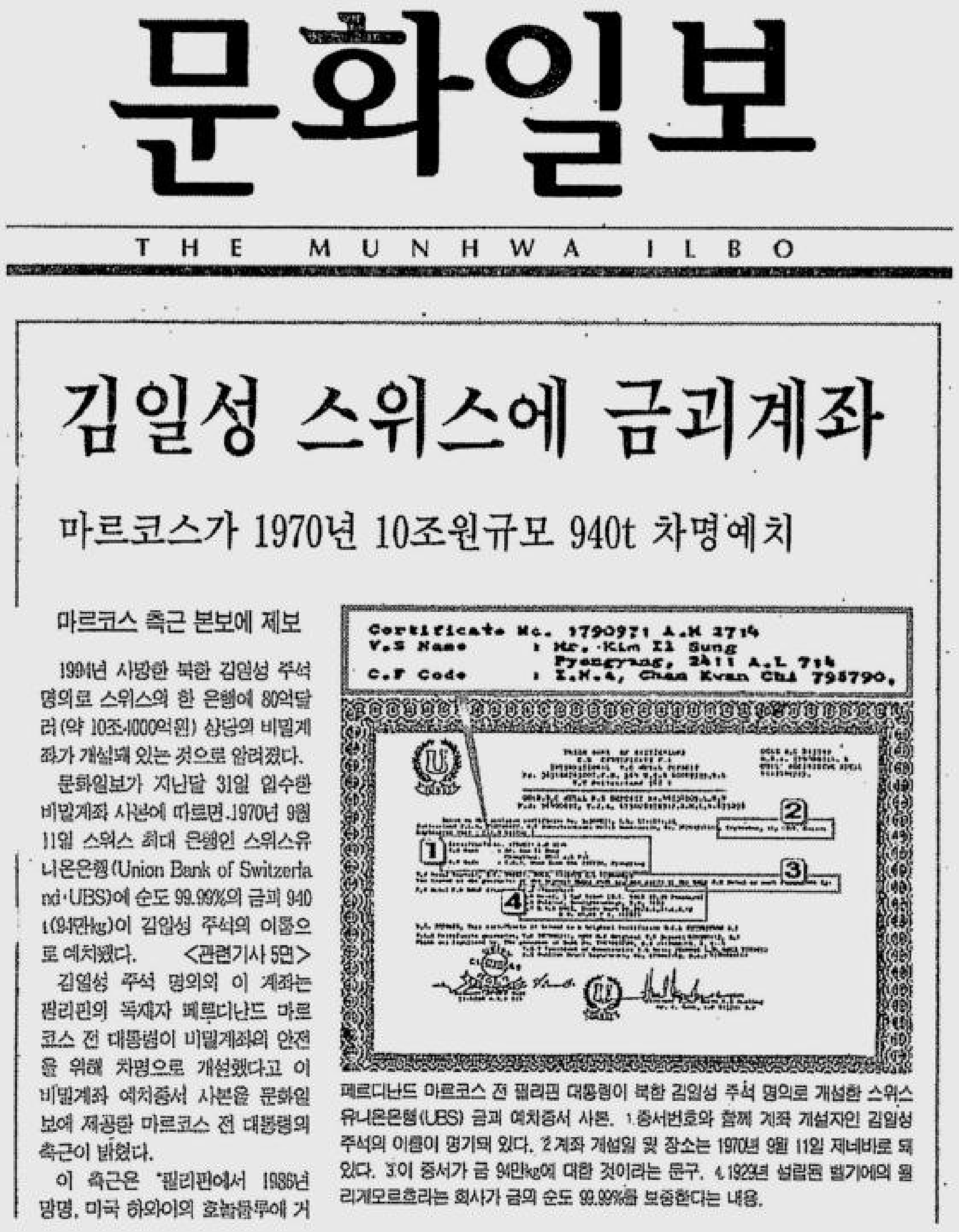
He said Marcos, later accused of human rights abuses and raiding the national treasury, was merely led astray "by his wife maybe."

"There are situations that would call for the Machiavellian style of leadership," Lacson argues.

"Because if it is good for the country, if it is good for the people, then we can apply that."

He said Ms Macapagal was "too focused on 2004," was only interested in having her picture taken with the poor, and had no clear plans to attack widespread poverty.

If he were in Ms Macapagal's shoes, he would "kick out all the useless advisers, those who brought her to power and expect to be repaid, civil society, the leftists all around her, the former presidents"—referring to the President's backers Fidel Ramos and Corazon Aquino. *AFP*



문화일보

THE MUNHWA ILBO

김일성 스위스에 금괴계좌

마르코스가 1970년 10조원규모 940t 차명예치

마르코스 측근 본보에 제보

1994년 사망한 북한 김일성 주석 명의로 스위스의 한 은행에 80억달러(약 10조4000억원) 상당의 비밀계좌가 개설돼 있는 것으로 알려졌다.

문화일보가 지난달 31일 입수한 비밀계좌 사본에 따르면 1970년 9월 11일 스위스 최대 은행인 스위스유니온은행(Union Bank of Switzerland·UBS)에 순도 99.99%의 금괴 940t(94만kg)이 김일성 주석의 이름으로 예치됐다. <관련기사 5면>

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Marcos used Kim Il-sung to hide gold?

(From page A1)

cret bank account was opened at the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS), the same bank where the Marcoses are believed to have once kept an account worth at least $13.2 billion.

"Former President Marcos had borrowed the names of dictators from third countries to prevent others from withdrawing deposits from his secret bank accounts," the unnamed former aide to Marcos told the newspaper.

Munhwa, carrying a copy of the bank account certificate on the front page, said Marcos had borrowed Kim Il-sung's name to deposit the gold bars at the UBS on Sept. 11, 1970.

"It remains uncertain whether Kim Il-sung received any kickbacks from Marcos or was notified of opening the bank account," the aide said.

But the aide, who offered the copy of the UBS account certificate to Munhwa, said he was not sure of a deal between the two dictators.

Yamashita treasure?

North Korean founder and dictator Kim Il-sung died in 1994. Marcos died in 1989, three years after he fled into exile in Hawaii.

The alleged gold bars were a part of the rumored Yamashita treasure, the loot of the Japanese army general from Asian countries during World War II, Munhwa said.

The report comes amid allegations that Marcos heiress Irene Araneta tried but failed to transfer funds from the UBS to Deutsche Bank in February. Justice officials and the Presidential Commission on Good Government are still working out how to proceed with a stalled investigation into the allegations.

The Philippines has been seeking to retrieve Marcos' alleged ill-gotten wealth amassed during his 20-year rule. Frozen Marcos deposits and confiscated assets recovered so far by the government are worth an amount in the neighborhood of hundreds of millions of dollars, not billions. *AFP*

World champ fights . . .

(From page A1)

Many saw Kasparov's defeat by IBM's Deep Blue as a watershed in the short history of computer science—raw computing power had finally beaten a world champion, 39 years after the creation of the first chess program.

But post-match controversy clouded the computer's narrow win, and Kramnik believes he can overturn the perception that computers are mightier than the human mind.

"I think that in the public eye the computer is already stronger than any chess player on the planet. I'm very eager to win and to prove that this is not the case," Kramnik said at a news conference.

Brains of Bahrain

Promoters with bright lights, smoke machines and blond fashion models hyped the Oct. 14-30 match as "The Brains of Bahrain," a $1-million heavyweight bout on par with the 1975 "Thrilla in Manila" boxing rematch between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier.

Sitting opposite the lanky Russian champion was a metal briefcase said to contain the latest version of Deep Fritz.

Physically little more than a CD-ROM disc, the chess program can consider 6 million chess positions a second and "learn" to counter the tactics of opponents.

Deep Fritz's German and Dutch creators claim their program is more formidable than Deep Blue, the 1.4-ton chess computer that defeated Kasparov 3 1/2 games to 2 1/2 games in New York in 1997.

Deep Fritz's ability to consider past games was showcased during an April computer chess tournament in Spain. The program climbed back from a five-game deficit against its main rival Deep Junior and won the competition.

Kasparov complained after his defeat by Deep Blue that the rules had been stacked against him. Deep Blue had access to all the past matches of Kasparov, while he was given no match history for the computer.

IBM technicians were also allowed to reprogram Deep Blue between games, an advantage that chess experts said amounted to playing a new opponent each day. And no mid-game breaks were permitted, which allowed the computer to exhaust its human opponent.

Rules tightened

The rules have been tightened for the Bahrain match, and both sides said they were confident of a fair result.

Kramnik, a 25-year-old former pupil of Kasparov, earned the right to represent human chess players last November when he dethroned Kasparov.

Chess has had two world champions since 1993, when Kasparov, champion at the time, broke away from FIDE, the World Chess Federation whose current world champion is Viswanathan Anand.

Kasparov formed the Professional Chess Association and defended his title twice before it disbanded in 1998. November's match was sponsored by Brain Games Network, an Internet company.

Some still call Kasparov the world's greatest chess player, but others say Kramnik may prove a better match for a computer. Kasparov's ability to demoralize his opponents was useless against emotionless Deep Blue.

Kramnik, famous for his pre-match preparation and cool, calculating play, is a "more rounded" player, British grandmaster John Speelman said.

Prediction

Speelman and fellow grandmaster Ray Keene, who will serve as match director, predicted that Kramnik would win.

No matter what the result is, the chess battle between humans and computers is sure to continue. Kasparov, who claimed after his Deep Blue loss that he'd "tear it to pieces" in a fair match, perhaps put it best when he said, "I think the competition has just started." *AP*

From 'Guns of August' to 'Gums of...'

(From page A1)

administration turned out to be an empty threat.

The 11-member opposition in the Senate had earlier cited the alleged payoff as one of its biggest artilleries against corruption in the Macapagal administration.

"Apparently, their guns have no bullets," Cayetano said. "It's just a firecracker," he said of the opposition's threat.

It was Sen. Blas Ople who announced during the opening of the Senate that the opposition would mobilize its big guns against the excesses of the administration.

Ople was set to deliver a major speech on the abuses of the military and police in their operations against the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan.

Ople flees

But over the weekend, he left for Geneva to attend the annual inter-parliamentary union conference.

This prompted Sen. John Osmeña to comment that the "*cañonero* (bomber)" had left the fight.

Cayetano said this could mean a "ceasefire."

At a news briefing, Senate President Franklin Drilon said; "It is now August and we continue to smile."

"On our part, we'll just wait and see who gets hurt. That's life," he said.

But the worst is yet to come, according to Sen. Edgardo Angara. "They just wait. When the bombs come, they may shake in their boots," said Angara, who ridiculed the President's "parable of the paper boats" in her first State of the Nation Address (Sona).

Opposition senators said they were shelving the issue after the opposition's star witness, former Palace correspondence secretary Veronica "Bing" Rodrigo, admitted that she had no direct knowledge of the alleged payoff to First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo.

Rodrigo clarified Tuesday night that she merely heard from somebody that Arroyo had received money from two telecommunication firms, which were denied congressional franchises through a presidential veto.

"What I said was '*napag-alaman ko* (I learned from someone)," referring to the fact that what I said about Mike Arroyo was only what was told to me by another source," Rodrigo said in a statement.

Rodrigo resigned as correspondence secretary of the President, her elementary and high school classmate, after Arroyo alluded to her as the one who received the money allegedly in exchange for influencing the President into rescinding her veto on bills granting congressional franchises to the Philippine Communications Clearinghouse Inc. (PCCI) and APC Wireless Interface Network Inc.

The President did not rescind her veto.

The opposition "guns" include privileged speeches on the $450-million Impsa power deal; an alleged fraudulent defense contract under the Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization Program and the breakdown of peace and order.

Opposition Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta yesterday delivered a speech on the problems of the educational system, but found herself speaking before three administration senators. Her speech failed to ignite any heated debate.

Premature

In Laguna, an organizer of the Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil) said it was premature to mobilize protest actions against the administration at this time.

"We went to the streets for the People Power II during the Estrada administration to oust the President because his administration was morally bankrupt. I don't think the same thing is already happening in the Macapagal administration pending the result of the investigation of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo," said Msgr. Gerry Bitoon, convenor of Kompil-Laguna. ***With a report from Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, August 2, 2001
17th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: **Ex 40:16-21, 34-38**
Gospel: **Mt 13:47-53**

Jesus said to the crowds, "The kingdom of heaven is like a big fishing net let down into the sea, in which every kind of fish has been caught. When the net is full, it is dragged ashore. Then they sit down and gather the good fish in buckets, but throw the worthless ones away. That is how it will be at the end of time; the angels will go out to separate the wicked from the just and throw them into the blazing furnace, where they will weep and gnash their teeth."

Jesus asked, "Have you understood all these things?" "Yes," they answered. So he said to them, "You will see that every teacher of the Law who becomes a disciple of the Kingdom is like a householder who can produce from his store things both new and old."

When Jesus had finished these parables, he left the place.

Commentary

Christian communities are venues for a wide variety of people called by God and brought together to build the kingdom. It is not up to the individual Christians to decide who belongs to it and who does not. This is the sole prerogative of God. Christians are to be like the scribe trained for the kingdom. They are challenged to keep the community together in a meaningful way. They have to interpret the law in such a way that there is place for both old and new people, for both old and new ways of interpreting the faith for the benefit of all.

We thank you Father for having brought us together as your new family. Grant us the wisdom and faith to keep your family as one.

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Lawyers warn buyer of Forbes Park lot . . .

(From page A1)

A copy of the lawyers' letter was sent to Ombudsman Aniano Desierto.

Aside from prosecuting Estrada for plunder and other criminal charges, the Office of the Ombudsman has filed forfeiture proceedings against the former President.

The forfeiture case against Estrada is targeting the mansions and other pieces of property that he allegedly acquired using funds from illegal gambling and payoffs.

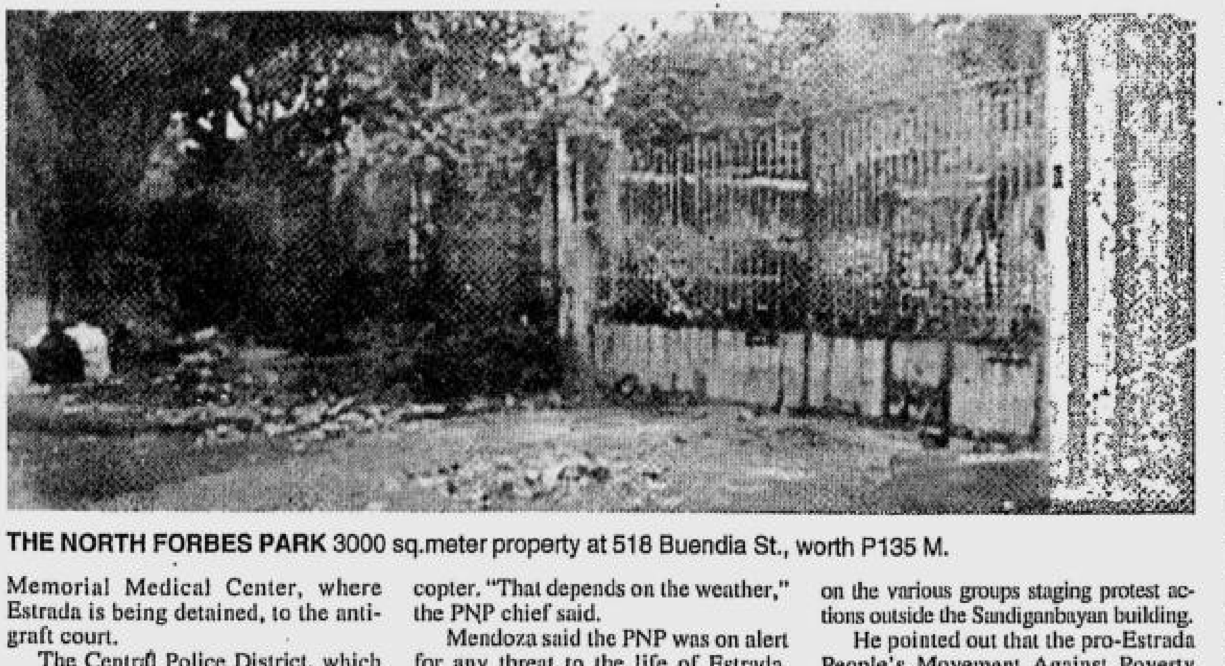
Trial starts

The plunder trial of the ousted leader starts today at the Sandiganbayan building on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

The Philippine National Police said yesterday that it was ready to secure Estrada and the Sandiganbayan.

"We are always prepared for any eventuality," the PNP chief, Director General Leandro Mendoza, said.

Mendoza said some 2,000 personnel from the elite Special Action Force and traffic and crowd dispersal units would secure the venue of the trial and the route from the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, where Estrada is being detained, to the anti-graft court.



THE NORTH FORBES PARK 3000 sq.meter property at 518 Buendia St., worth P135 M.

The Central Police District, which covers the Quezon City area, will also go on full alert.

Mendoza did not reveal whether, Estrada would be transported by helicopter. "That depends on the weather," the PNP chief said.

Mendoza said the PNP was on alert for any threat to the life of Estrada. "We are monitoring but so far there is no report, intelligence or information on any threat," he said.

Mendoza said the police would focus on the various groups staging protest actions outside the Sandiganbayan building.

He pointed out that the pro-Estrada People's Movement Against Poverty and the anti-Estrada forces "can gather crowds at a moment's notice. That's why we are preparing." ***With a report from Alcuin Papa***

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE: PROVISIONAL REMEDIES)-Preliminary attachment—When the preliminary attachment is issued upon a ground which is at the same time the applicant's cause of action: e.g., an action for money or property embezzled or fraudulently misapplied or converted to his own use by a public officer, or an officer of a corporation, or an attorney, factor, broker, agent or clerk, in the course of his employment as such, or by any other person in a fiduciary capacity, or for a willful violation of duty, or an action against a party who has been guilty of fraud in contracting the debt of incurring the obligation upon which the action is brought, the defendant is not allowed to file a motion to dissolve the attachment under Section 13 of Rule 57 by offering to show the falsity of the factual averments in the plaintiff's application and affidavits on which the writ was based—and consequently that the writ based thereon had been improperly or irregularly issued—the reason being that the hearing on such a motion for dissolution of the writ would be tantamount to a trial of the merits of the action. In other words, the merits of the action would be ventilated at a mere hearing of a motion, instead of at a regular trial. Thus, the merits of the action in which a writ of preliminary attachment has been issued are not triable on a motion for dissolution of the attachment, otherwise an applicant for the lifting of the writ could force a trial of the merits of the case on a mere motion. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Ynares-Santiago, First Division, Chuidian v. Sandiganbayan (Fifth Division), G.R. No. 139941, January 19, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

GOLF: PGA John Deere Classic, Final Round at 8 a.m. (r), Highlights at 11:30 p.m. on Star Sports

LPGA Giant Eagle Classic, First Round at 5 p.m. (r) on ESPN

TENNIS: Mercedes-Benz Tennis Masters Series, Early Round Coverage Day #3 at 11 a.m. and 9 p.m. (r), Day #4 tomorrow at 1 a.m. on ESPN

VOLLEYBALL: FIVB Beach Volleyball - Switzerland Open, Women's Semifinals at 2:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▪ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

RP boxer retains crown

TOKYO—Rev Santillan of the Philippines defended his Orient Pacific welterweight title yesterday, but Kevin Palmer, an American who fights out of Japan, lost his Orient Pacific middleweight crown. Fighting in the central Japan city of Nagoya, Santillan narrowly kept his title when he fought to a draw with Hiroshi Watanabe in the 12-round bout. *AP*

It's Red Bull by 19 points

GAMES TOMORROW *(Cuneta Astrodome)*
5:15 p.m.—San Miguel vs Alaska
7:30 p.m.—Red Bull vs Purefoods

BY JUNE NAVARRO

BATANG Red Bull scored an emphatic 95-76 victory over Purefoods last night to level their best-of-5 semifinal series at 1-1 in the PBA Commissioners Cup at the Philsports Arena.

The Thunder transformed an otherwise riveting encounter to a bore in the third quarter as they reduced the face-off to a best-of-three collision.

Junthy Valenzuela, Antonio Lang and Jimwell Torion combined to erect Thunder's 75-57 lead seconds before the end of the fourth quarter.

Unheralded Lordy Tugade, Lowell Briones and Jay Mendoza then applied the finishing touches for Red Bull as Purefoods' string of luck came to a bitter end.

The Hotdogs absorbed only their second beating in 10 outings.

"Purefoods completely struggled tonight and we readily took advantage of it. Surely, they will come back fighting on Friday," said Lang, who lit the scoreboards with a game-high 30 points.

With Lang single-handedly doing the game-ripping chores, the Thunder posted a 43-32 advantage midway in the second quarter.

In the second game, San Miguel Beer flirted with disaster before posting a 79-71 triumph and tie its series with Alaska Milk.

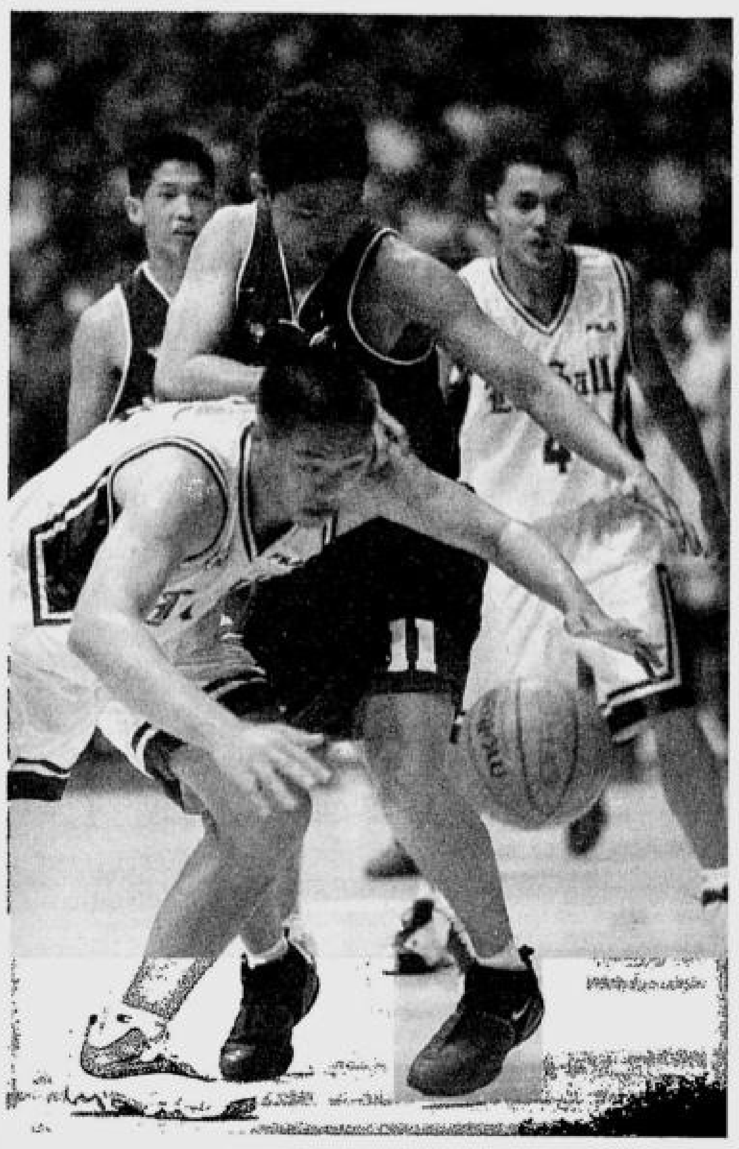
Danny Ildefonso saved the Beermen from the jaws of defeat, pouring majority of his game-high 30 points in the final quarter.

Scores:

RED BULL 95—Lang 30, Valenzuela 13, Pennisi 8, Mendoza 8, Harp 8, Torion 6, Tugade 6, Agustin 4, Miller 4, Briones 4, Raymundo 4.

PUREFOODS 76—Wood 26, Patrimonio 13, Castillo 10, Yee 7, Evangelista 6, Fernandez 5, Yap 5, Feihl 2, Victoria 2.

Quarters: 24-18, 45-36, 75-60, 95-76.



UAAP ACTION ROMY HOMILLADA

Michael Christian Vainio of La Salle is set to grab a loose ball ahead of Ateneo's Hernando Elmido Jr. (No. 11) during their UAAP encounter which the Archers won, 91-76. Looking on are Ateneo's Magnum Membrere ((left) and Ren Ren Ritualo. Today's games pit Far Eastern University against Adamson and La Salle against National University. FEU and La Salle share the lead with 3-1 cards in a tie with idle Ateneo.

NCAA TODAY *(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)*
12nn—San Beda vs UPHR (jrs/srs)
3 p.m.—Mapua vs PCU (jrs/srs)

Blades, Gems rout rivals

STANDINGS	W	L		W	L
Andok's San Juan	10	3	FedEx Laguna	6	7
LBC Batangas	10	3	Nueva Ecija	3	9
Cebuana Lhuillier	10	4	Socsargen	2	11
Negros	9	4	Davao	2	11

GAMES TOMORROW *Tinga Gym (Taguig)*
3:00 p.m.—Nueva Ecija vs Davao
5:30 p.m.—Laguna vs Socsargen

BY ROY LUARCA

LIPA CITY—The Batangas Blades came out extra sharp last night as they routed the FedEx Laguna Lakers, 103-85, in the MBA First Phase at the De La Salle-Lipa Gym.

Bucking manpower shortage, the Blades banked on the hot hands of Ralph Rivera and balanced contributions from the rest to repeat over the Lakers and assure themselves of finishing either first or second after the elimination round.

Rivera, a former national player slowly returning to his deadly form, fired 27 points, including five triples, to compensate for the puny production of Compton, who's bothered by a sore throat, to power the Blades to their 10th win in 13 starts.

The Blades also missed the services of the injured Peter Martin and Tonyboy Espinosa.

The Lakers fell to 6-7 despite the career-high 45 points of Chris Clay.

Earlier, Roy Lura and Homer Se filled up the slack left by two starters as the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems beat the Davao Eagles, 104-89, at the Rizal Memorial Colleges Gym in Davao City.

Wang's beats Metro Manila

GAMES TODAY
2:00 p.m. - Spring vs Mighty Tobacco
3:30 p.m. - Hub Net Café vs MMC-Rexona
5:00 p.m. - Wang's vs Konica

WANG'S Ball Club subdued Metro Manila Colleges-Rexona, 83-78, last Tuesday to tie idle Spring Cooking Oil and Konica (Nueva) for the lead in the Spiceland-NBC Danny Espiritu Cup basketball tournament. Wang's led 46-39 at the turn en route to its fifth win in six games in the tourney sponsored by Pisong Asin, Spring Margarine, Tanduay Distillery, Red Bull, SMB, Ginebra San Miguel, Purefoods, Alaska, Pop Cola and Shell and supported by Milo.

Brokenshire nips Ateneo de Davao

DAVAO CITY—Six-foot-five Rudolf Alexis Mampule scored the game's final two points to lift Brokenshire Science High School to a 7-6 squeaker over favorite Ateneo de Davao High School Saturday in the final provincial leg of the Nike 3 on 3 basketball championships at the University of Mindanao-Matina gym.

Mampule tied the count at 6-all with a 15-foot jumper, time down to one minute and 30 seconds left. He then scored the go-ahead layup with 35 seconds left as Ateneo de Davao struggled to send the game into overtime. Jeffrey Soldium's desperate jumper failed to find its mark as time expired.

Special citations were given to lady coach Loida Sopera of the Holy Cross of Agdao and to PSC commissioner Buth Ramirez who plays a major part in the success of Nike 3 on 3 in Davao City.

The Manila elimination will be on Aug. 11 at La Salle Greenhills, with 60 schools competing.

SPORTSWATCH

Andre, Anna lose

MONTREAL —Andre Agassi was upset in the first round of the Tennis Masters Series-Canada by Croatian qualifier Ivan Ljubicic 6-2, 6-4. "I felt like all he had to do was keep the ball in the court," said Agassi, who lost in the first round for the fourth time this year. "It wasn't pretty. I would have struggled against a lot of players today." Anna Kournikova also got the upset axe, losing to Australian Nicole Pratt, 7-6 (7-1), 1-6, 3-6. The 20-year-old Russian beauty had been sidelined with a stress fracture in her left foot since losing to Amelie Mauresmo in the quarterfinals of the Paris Open in February. Kournikova suffered her first loss in four career meetings with Pratt. *AP*

RP Open on ESPN

ESPN will air the highlights of the Casino Filipino-San Miguel Beer 86th Philippine Open at Wack Wack starting Aug. 4 at 7 p.m. "This is a welcome boost for Philippine golf in the international scene because of the strong following of ESPN all over the world," said Benny Gopez, organizing committee chair of the Philippine Open with Rod Feliciano and Ben Abalos as joint-chairmen of the executive committee. The Philippine Open coverage will also have separate special telecasts in Taiwan and India.

'Ratratan' derby set

FARM-TO-FARM screening of stags is now ongoing for the "Ratratan 6-Stag Derby," slated on Sept. 4 and 6 at Mandaluyong Coliseum, with Ramon Mansenares and Muroy Dolorico as hosts. Sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo. Stags banded by Pagba, Ucap, Migba, NGBA and GF-BAN are automatically accepted to join. Call 951-5078, 0917-4531276, 049-5621551 or 0917-3947794. Entry fee is P25,000 and minimum bet is P11,000.

10 YEARS AGO

ROGELIO Antonio Jr. drew with Swiss IM Claude Landenbersue in 66 moves in Biel, Switzerland to keep his GM bid alive. Antonio survived Landenbersue's one pawn edge in the Sicilian encounter.

***

EDGAR Silverio captured the 1991 Koryo House Windsurfing Regatta at the Surfcamp, Lake Caliraya in Cavinti, Laguna. It was Silverio's fifth title in eight regattas.

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Lucky Fil 2. Vinfa's Pride 3. Time Specialist 4. Remarkable

Race 2—1. Courage 2. Padron Real 3. Smart Kevin 4. Gifted Guest

Race 3—1. Southern Skies 2. Waving Oscar 3. Full Blast 4. Sweet Justice

Race 4—1. Speed Charm 2. Dancin Indy 3. Ahead of Time 4. Richie Rich

Race 5—1. Black Ijhay 2. Talk to Patsy 3. Recticano

Race 6—1. Glorious Riches 2. Irish Star 3. Loose Cannon 4. Angela's Storm

Race 7—1. Cluny 2. Cool Under Fire 3. Princess Malinda 4. Legitimo

Race 8—1. Aprey's Choice 2. Snake Dancer 3. Sensible 4. Photogenic 5. Mighty Dragon

Race 9—1. Red Bells 2. Secret Quest 3. Something Best 4. Red Anya

Criminology stude tops Shell chess

SENIOR criminology student Mark E. Mangubat and high school freshman Boris Michael T. Dizon both went unbeaten in seven games to top their respective divisions recently in the 2001 Shell National Active Chess Championships-Eastern Visayas at the Jesuit-run Sacred Heart School.

A record-setting 571 entries participated in the seven-round Swiss system tournament co-sponsored by PLDT Negros Navigation Corp., Solid Shipping Corp., Holiday Plaza Hotel of Cebu and the Shell-Citibank Mastercard.

Playing black, Mangubat went for the sharp Gruenfield Defense and needed 35 moves to tame Lapu-Lapu City's Neil Amores. Mangubat earned the junior division gold medal, P5,000 in cash and a ticket to the national grand finals slated this November in Manila. Silver medalist Christian Arroyo scored 6.5 points and took P4,000 plus a seat to grand finals.

Sacred Heart School's F. Julian Hernando, SJ, Shell chess project coordinator Teddy Bolivar and national master Ben Macapaz awarded the prizes.

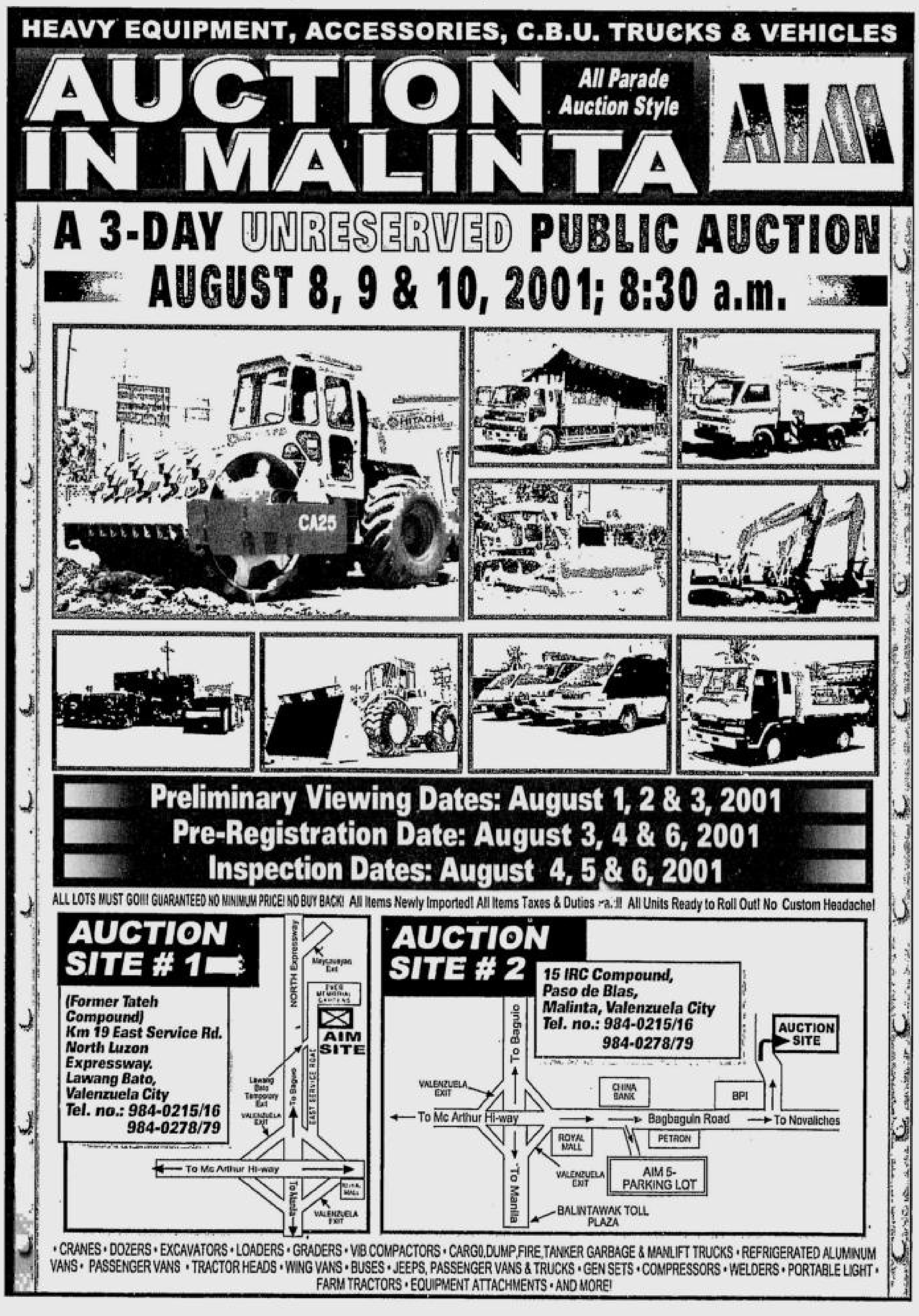
Kiddie top-seed Diez mauled fourth-seeded Kim Yap in 40 moves of a Sicilian Dragon in the round 7 skirmish to take the gold medal, P4,000 and a grand finals slot.

University of Cebu high school freshman Denver Ruayan notched 6.5 points to take the silver medal and a grand finals seat.

Gloria, Atotubo win

BACOLOD CITY—National masters Eric Gloria and Rodrigo Atotubo hurdled their respective penultimate round assignment Wednesday to assure their entry into the next round of the P2.2-million Glutaphos-Philippine Chess Grand Prix at the Sugarland Hotel here. Gloria defeated Fami Fazon in 49 moves of a Benoni while Atotubo prevailed over Vicente Lee III in 44 moves of a Sicilian to earn their respective four points in this event sponsored by Pascual Laboratories Inc., a joint project by the City of Bacolod, Department of Interior and Local Government and Philippine Chess Federation in cooperation with Sugarland Hotel and Negros Navigation.

Also earning their four points in this six-round Swiss System elimination series are NM Alexander Lupian of Sto. Tomas, Davao and candidate master Catalino Pestaño, a practicing financial consultant of Roxas City, after halving their respective matches.



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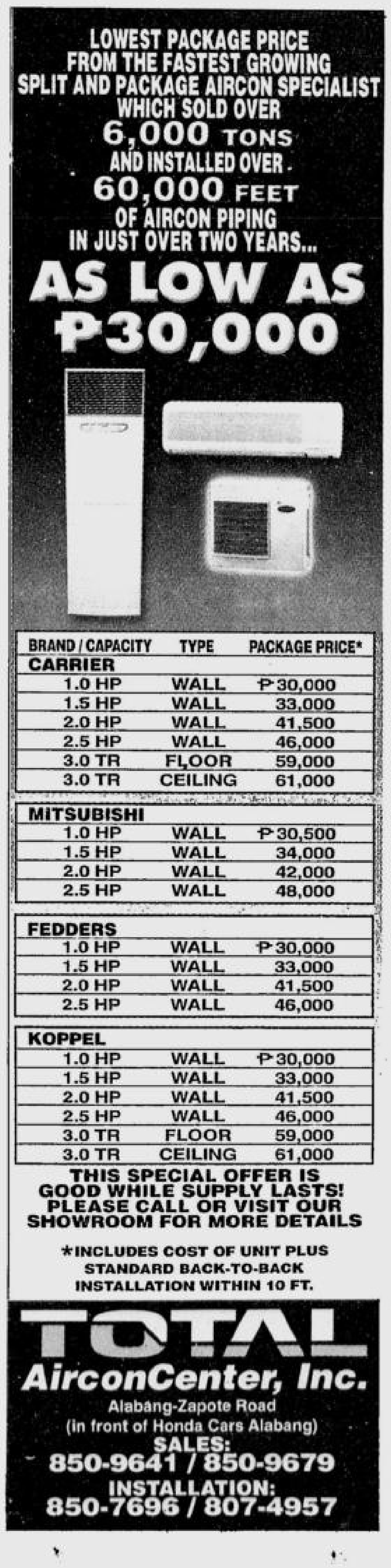

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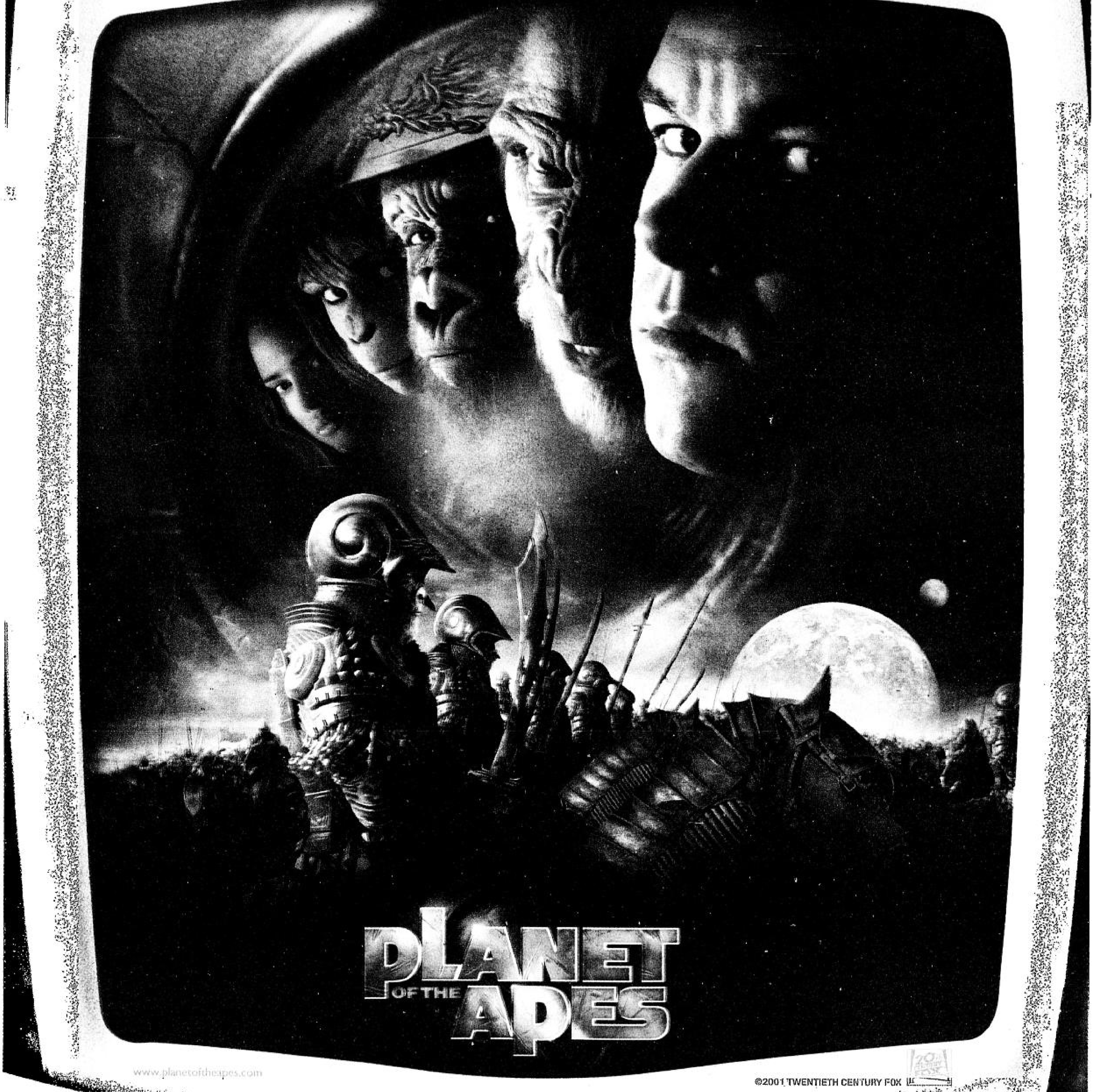

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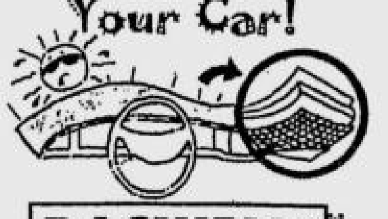
ON TARGET: I have the goods on Ping Lacson

METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor



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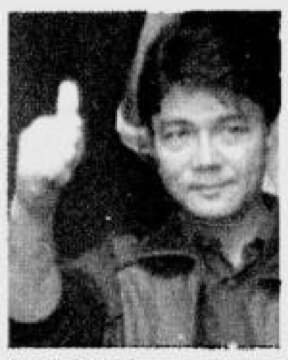
Malonzo claims victory

SC asks Comelec to lift suspension

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA



MALONZO

THE SUPREME Court on Tuesday ordered the Commission on Elections to lift its suspension of the proclamation of winning candidates in Caloocan City.

The ruling paved the way for Reynaldo Malonzo to declare a victory over his political opponent in the hotly contested race for the mayoral seat.

The Comelec suspended the proclamation of winners after mayoral candidate Luis "Baby" Asistio petitioned the commission to declare an election failure due to the alleged massive disenfranchisement of voters in the May 14 election.

In a three-page resolution, the High Court issued a temporary restraining order to stop the Comelec from implementing its suspension order.

The Comelec, which has yet to decide on Asistio's petition, has no choice but to declare the winning candidates, Malonzo said.

MALONZO/A18

NPA kills guard in San Mateo assault

BY AGNES DONATO

ONE security guard was killed and another wounded yesterday after a 20-strong band of suspected NPA guerillas raided the office of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) at the San Mateo landfill in Rizal province.

Perlie Llanzana of the Superb Security Agency died from several gunshot wounds, police said. A stray bullet also hit MMDA employee Antonio Payatos on the right foot.

Llanzana was shot when he tried to stop the heavily armed men, who arrived on board a passenger jeep, from entering the MMDA compound about 7:30 a.m. yesterday.

Supt. Ramon Dominguez, chief of the San Mateo police, said the suspected NPA rebels stopped a jeepney in Barangay Pintong Bocaue in San Mateo town and ordered all the passengers out of the vehicle.

The jeepney, owned by Ernesto Nisperos, plies the Cogeo-Landfill route.

On board the jeepney, the suspects tried to enter the MMDA compound through the main gate. But Llanzana halted them, police said.

Llanzana, police said, had long been receiving death threats because of his strictness in enforcing the no-trespassing policy in the compound, particularly when it came to scavengers.

But the suspects forced their way in and shot Llanzana before taking his firearms, police said.

Dominguez said the suspects shouted NPA slogans before fleeing on board the jeepney.

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Cowboy Grill ARQUIZA ST. MANILA	STREETLIFE MIX-UP/MAJEED	NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy Grill REMEDIOS ST., MALATE	KOOL JACKS FAT 16	NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎521.8143
Cowboy Grill NOVALICHES Q.C.	FEEDBACK CITY BORN	SOUTHBORDER AUG. 8 250 CONS. F & D
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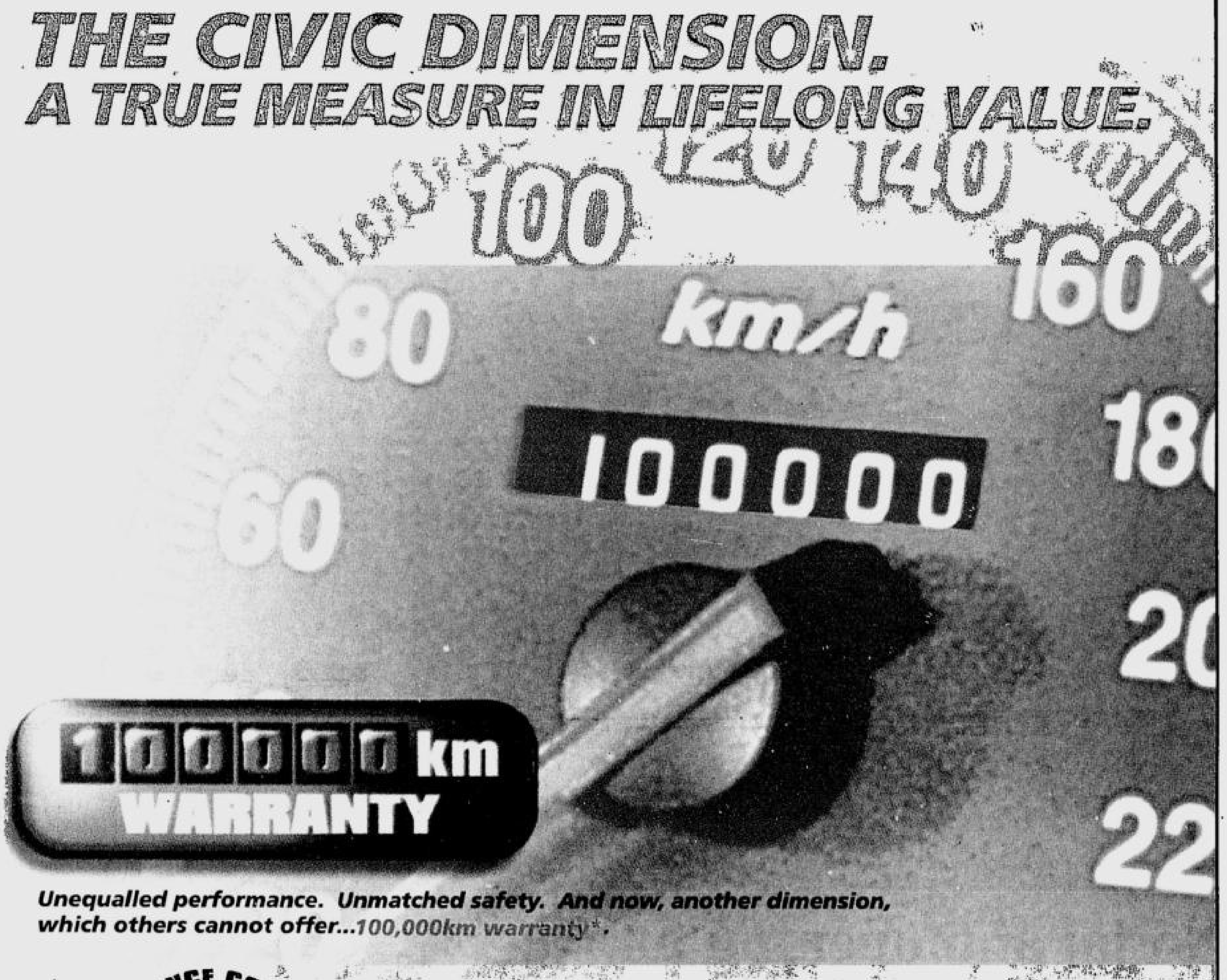

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I have the goods on Ping Lacson

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

SEN. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson has called me a liar in reaction to my exposés about him.

The good senator strongly denied my allegation that he was facing charges of money laundering before US courts. The charges stemmed from his being caught by US customs authorities trying to smuggle into the United States a total of US $8 million.

Lacson said he was planning to file libel charges against me and my editors at the Inquirer for coming out with what he called "blatant lies" against him.

***

I stand on solid ground in my accusations that Lacson is facing money laundering charges in the United States.

Yesterday, I submitted to the Inquirer news desk a list of banks in the United States, Hong Kong and Canada where Lacson, his wife Alice and former President Joseph "Erap" Estrada have deposits. Included in that list is the amount of dollars they have in each account and the account numbers.

For internal reasons, the Inquirer is withholding publication of the list until certain documentary requirements are fulfilled.

***

What would the list prove?

If the supporting documents of the list can be released, they will prove that what I've been saying about Lacson is true. The mind-boggling dollar deposits he, his wife and Erap have in the foreign banks confirm stories about him: that he and the former president were involved in various criminal activities.

***

For how else could Lacson and Erap have accumulated such a huge amount of money in a span of eight and a half years—six years when Erap was vice president and chief of the powerful Presidential Anti-Crime Commission and two and a half years as president.

They couldn't have amassed such wealth in three lifetimes!

Now, tell me, Mr. Senator, where did you get all that money?

You can now file all the libel cases you want against me and the Inquirer. Based on my evidence, you and your former master are topnotch crooks.

***

Mr. Senator, you said that I used my influence in "writing off" my debts at the sequestered RPN 9 television station. You added that I was given a program, "Isumbong Mo kay Tulfo," by the network's board chair, Dante Ang, President Macapagal's publicist.

Mr. Senator, I have not run away from my debts at the network which my firm, On Target Media Concepts, incurred during the administration of Erap when "Isumbong" was a bloc-timer. A bloc-timer pays for TV or radio airtime.

I am about to settle all my debts at RPN 9 which, at their highest, amounted to P1.8 million. My debt is now only P430,000. And I'm still paying the station.

The reason I incurred such a debt was that the sponsors were late in paying my firm for their commercials in "Isumbong."

I'm sure, Mr. Senator, you got the information about my debt from one of the former newscasters at RPN 9 who was your paramour. It is said that you used your influence to have this lady love of yours installed as one of the members of the RPN board of directors during Erap's time.

Your lady love gave you half the story because she did not mention that I have been paying the network. Please ask the present RPN 9 management.

By the way, your lady love became arrogant when she became a member of the RPN board. She acted like a prima donna and became very inefficient as a newscaster. She became spoiled because of you, Ping.

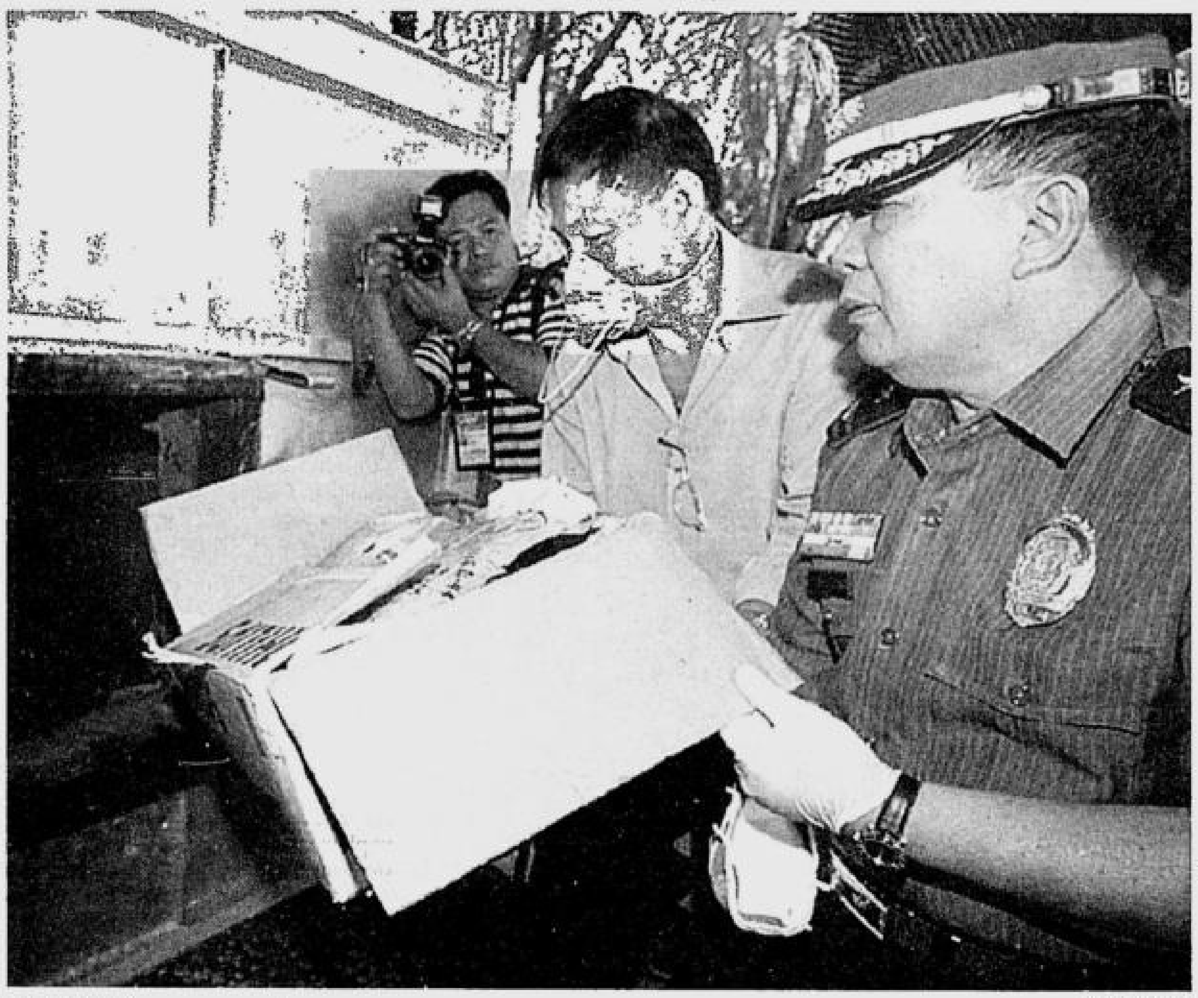
***

My source made a mistake when he said that former Times Journal publisher Raymond Burgos was with the group of Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino when the superintendent was caught at the Canadian-US border last year with $1 million.

Burgos went with Aquino to the United States to attend a gun show but he was left in Las Vegas when Aquino proceeded to Canada to get $1 million from an unidentified source.

Sorry about that, Raymond!

PNP going to court over 'Diaries'



BURN IT

ERIK ARAZAS

Chief Supt. Jose Mario Pedregosa (right) of the Northern Police District and other police officials are set to torch 6 kilos of heroin and 4.5 kilos of shabu at the San Lazaro Crematorium.

BY ALCUIN PAPA

THE TOp brass of the Philippine National Police yesterday said it would go to court if Malacañang denies its request for a temporary restraining order to stop the showing of the movie "Red Diaries."

"We are not wife beaters and rapists," PNP chief Director Gen. Leandro Mendoza said in decrying what he called the brutal portrayal of policemen in the film.

The PNP had already sent a request to Malacañang to recall the film. It earlier sent the same request to the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board.

However, MTRCB chief Alejandro Roces wrote back saying it had already issued permits for the showing of the film and that it was only the Palace which could revoke the film now.

"Even if its already showing, it can be recalled since the film's theater run is still long. It would even reach the provinces," Mendoza said. ``We would go to court if Malacañang denies our plea."

PRESIDENT Gloria Arroyo will not withdraw the controversial film "Red Diaries" from theaters despite protestations from the police, presidential spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao said yesterday.

"Films have a message and are supposed to be a message. But the message there (the film) is that police are brutal. They are rapists and wife beaters. That film's portrayal is too brutal," Mendoza explained.

He said the PNP leadership was concerned with the portrayal of cops in the film, starring young sexy actress Assunta de Rossi, which started showing in local theaters the other day.

"The film's message is implanted in the minds of the moviegoers. People might think we are like that. But we are not like that. The police are on the frontline in the fight against crime. If you destroy their image, they can't fulfill their duties," Mendoza cried.

He explained that, while a small percentage of policemen are involved in criminal activities, "to beat your wife or rape someone, that's not right."

"The problem is that they portray violent acts committed by police. I'm sure that people in other professions would not allow that kind of portrayal. It is extremely bad. It's too much and we won't allow that," Mendoza said.

He cited the PNP's adherence to international human rights call that the dignity and rights of women be respected.

In the film, De Rossi portrays a wife of a corrupt cop who is routinely beaten up. When she tries to leave him, her husband allows her to be gang-raped by other policemen.

No jai alai opening on Aug. 7

THE PHILIPPINE Amusement and Gaming Corporation (Pagcor) yesterday announced that the corporation's jai alai operations will remain suspended.

The clarification was made to refute persistent reports citing "reliable sources" that Pagcor will re-open jai alai on Aug. 7.

On June 20, the state-gaming firm invoked its regulatory authority by suspending jai alai operations after the Supreme Court denied its motion for reconsideration of an earlier decision declaring that the Pagcor charter does not give it the franchise to operate jai alai.

"The decision was made in order to protect the interest of the corporation, the government, the off-fronton betting stations, and the jai alai betting public.

Jai alai operations will remain suspended unless the Supreme Court grants the second motion for reconsideration filed by Pagcor on July 6, said Pagcor chief of staff for operations Rafael "Butch" Francisco.

He warned the public about believing reports on the supposed re-opening of jai alai without a favorable decision from the Supreme Court.

Malonzo claims . . .

(From page 17)

Malonzo yesterday asked the Comelec to immediately proclaim him as city mayor for a third consecutive term.

Based on the final but unofficial Comelec count, Malonzo and his partymates in the People Power Coalition ticket dominated the local elections.

But Baby Asistio and his older brother congressional candidate Macario "Boy" Asistio Jr., believe that the Supreme Court resolution covers only the suspension of proclamation, and that their petition for the Comelec to declare an election failure is still under consideration.

"It's not over till it's over," said Pablo Casimina, spokesperson for the Asistios. "The Supreme Court order is silent on our petition."

The high court gave the Asistios 10 days to respond to the resolution.

Malonzo's victory over his fierce political rival is the final nail in the coffin for the Asistios.

The family dominated Caloocan politics for several decades. The family patriarch, Macario Sr., was city mayor for 20 years.

His son, Macario Jr., was mayor for more than 10 years until he was defeated in 1995 by his then vice mayor Malonzo.

That defeat was a real blow from which the Asistios failed to recover.

After serving his third and final term as congressman this year, Luis Asistio challenged Malonzo in the last mayoral race.

Macario Jr. also ran for Congress against Malonzo's protege, ex-Councilor Edgar Erice.

But two months after the riotous election in Caloocan, the Comelec still has to proclaim the winners. It has also failed to resolve the Asistios' petition asking the poll body to declare an election failure.

The Asistios urged the commission to hold a special election after they complained that many residents were not able to vote on May 14 allegedly due to the delay in the distribution of election materials.

They claimed Malonzo-through city treasurer Lourdes Jose-orchestrated the delay to prevent residents in the Asistios' bailiwick from voting.

Arson or arson with murder?

BY JEROME ANING

THE MANILA fire department yesterday charged a 22-year-old San Beda College student with consummated arson before the city prosecutor's office for allegedly burning a parish house in Sta. Mesa before dawn Wednesday.

Fr. Raul Villamiel, 46, curate of the Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Bacood, was found dead inside his room at the two-story house adjoining the parish church between Magistrado Abad Santos and Biyaya Streets, Barangay 609.

But it remains to be determined if the priest died during fire or if was already dead when it broke off.

A large portion of the priest's body was burned and he was initially said to have suffocated.

Fire investigators, however, are looking into the angle that suspect Alain Patrick Bayuda (not Payutan as earlier reported) may have first killed the priest before setting the room on fire.

It is noteworthy that the case filed against Bayuda was "consummated arson" and not "arson with murder."

The head of the fire department's arson division, Chief Insp. Fennimore Jaudian, told the Inquirer that his office would refer case's murder aspect to the Western Police District's homicide investigation.

The fire official also denied saying that robbery was the motive of the murder. Jaudian said the motive would be up to the police to determine.

Woman killed in fire

A WOMAN was killed while a fireman was injured in a fire that razed a slum community and left at least 150 homeless in Las Piñas City on Tuesday afternoon. The fatality was identified only as Tita. Firemen found her charred body among the still smoldering fire debris shortly after sunset.

Velasco at Glorietta

PAINTER Lydia Velasco explores the many facets of the female psyche in her Woman Series which opens this afternoon at the Glorietta Artspace, Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati. The show, organized by Art Philippines, runs up to Aug. 15.

Imelda houses demolished

BY JEROME ANING

FOUR houses found to be encroaching on three lanes of a street in Sampaloc, Manila were torn down by City Hall personnel yesterday morning.

The residences, located on Piy Margal Street, were built 25 years ago through the mass housing project of then human settlements minister and First Lady Imelda Romualdez-Marcos.

City Hall said the houses had encroached on three lanes of the street, leaving only one lane for vehicles. Not only did the houses hamper the smooth flow of traffic along Piy Margal, they also turned the railroad crossing at the street's intersection with Antipolo and Algeciras streets into a blind spot.

Mayor Lito Atienza said that the five families occupying the illegal structures will be relocated to the city government's housing project in San Andres Bukid.

Atienza was accompanied by his secretary, the city engineer, general services chief, urban planning officer and traffic police chief in overseeing the demolition.

Meralco crewmen were also present to assist in the diversion of the power lines.

During the demolition, a former barangay *tanod*, Tomas Alentado, boldly approached the mayor and complained that he would lose his only source of livelihood with the restoration of the Piy Margal's three lanes.

Alentado, 44, said that he earns P200 a day by directing vehicular traffic at the railroad crossing for the past nine years from dawn to dusk. The man carried a can in one hand to accept coins tossed in by motorists passing the intersection.

Atienza immediately gave Alentado a new job, making him an employee of the demolition crew, which is under the city engineer's office.

Meet Jaymie.

Find more about her on Sunday, August 5.

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Malonzo declares 'victory' as Asistio followers defect

By Christian V. Esguerra

CALOOCAN City OIC Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo on Tuesday declared "victory" over his political rivals after three opposition candidates for councilor appeared to have defected to his camp.

Alex Aruelo, Boy Bacolod, and Tino Bagus on Monday took their oaths as acting councilors pending the proclamation of official winners in Caloocan.

Their oath-taking, Malonzo said on Tuesday, meant that they recognized his appointment as officer in charge.

Earlier, the three councilors snubbed the oath-taking of Malonzo and other administration candidates for councilor at Malacañang.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had appointed Malonzo and several of his party mates as OICs since the Commission on Elections has yet to decide on a petition to declare an election failure filed by ex-Rep. Luis "Baby" Asistio and brother Macario "Boy" Asistio Jr.

Aruelo, Bacolod, and Bagus ran for councilors under the Asistios' opposition ticket.

Malonzo also noted that their "defection" proved that they did not want to have an election failure declared in Caloocan.

Allan Encarnacion, the Asistios spokesperson, described the three OIC councilors as "traitors."

He said his camp had long been expecting them to transfer allegiance to Malonzo, the Asistios' bitter political rival.

"They're not used to going hungry. They are also ungrateful. They ate off the palm of the hands of the Asistios," he said in Filipino.

Aruelo, Bacolod and Bagus could not be reached for comment.

Encarnacion also warned that their oath taking could lead them into trouble especially when the Comelec upholds the Asistios' petition for an election failure.

If that happens, the Comelec would hold a special election and the OIC councilors would be forced to run as independent candidates, he said.

The Asistios, he said, would not take them, and Malonzo, would not have them in his ticket since he already has a full slot.

"They'd be left out in the cold. They made a bad decision," Encarnacion said.

The Comelec has yet to declare whether to proclaim official winners or declare an election failure in Caloocan.

Comelec Commissioner Luz Tangcangco had earlier announced on radio that she had voted in favor of declaring a failure of election in Caloocan.

The Asistios filed the petition to declare an election failure after Malonzo allegedly orchestrated the disenfranchisement of many voters in Caloocan.

Rice cake vendor also sells shabu

By Christian V. Esguerra

INSTEAD of selling only rice cakes and bananacues, Gloria dela Cruz, 47, was also found selling shabu after Malabon police arrested her on Tuesday during a buy-bust operation.

Police found on Dela Cruz at least 30 sachets of shabu.

Members of the Drug Enforcement Unit stormed the suspect's house in Tugatog, Malabon after they received reports the she was selling shabu in the area, said SPO1 Wilfredo Elicay.

Investigation showed that the suspect sold rice cakes and bananacues as cover for her drug dealing.

Police said that a policeman posed as a buyer of shabu and went to the suspect's house.

Dela Cruz, police said, went inside her house and returned minutes later with a sachet of shabu with a street value of P200.

Police are set to file drug charges against the suspect who is detained at the Malabon Police Headquarters.

Hostage

By Jerome Aning

A SUSPECTED holdup man on Tuesday took hostage a student for about 30 minutes inside a bus terminal in Pasay City.

Gerald Eralino, 28, married, a former security guard and resident of Kabilang Baybay, Carmona, Cavite, surrendered to SPO3 Charlie Bruno, a city policeman disguised as a priest.

The hostage, Timothy Marquez, 16, a student at the Mapua Institute of Technology and resident of Sta. Rosa, Laguna, said the suspect boarded the bus he was in at the Manila City Hall about 2 p.m. Tuesday. Marquez told police he alighted at the Biñan Bus Lines terminal at the corner of Taft and Gil Puyat avenues 30 minutes later.

But when he was about to board a bus for Laguna, Marquez said the suspect suddenly grabbed him and poked a Magnum .22 at his nape.

"Don't shout, I only wanted to speak to Nonoy," Marquez quoted the suspect as saying in Filipino.

He said the suspect then dragged him to a corner of the terminal as policemen from a police precinct on Gil Puyat responded.

Negotiations for the student's release dragged for about an hour, during which a city policeman, SPO3 Charlie Bruno, disguised himself as a priest from the nearby San Isidro Church and tried to convince the suspect to give up.

After assurances that he will not be harmed, the suspect finally surrendered to SPO3 Bruno, who promptly handcuffed him.

The suspect was later brought to the city police headquarters for investigation.

'Budol-budol'

By Jerome Aning

A RETIRED employee of the Department of Public Works and Highways on Monday lost more than P30,000 worth of cash and jewelry to five suspected members of the "budol-budol" gang who pretended to be fish traders in Binondo, Manila.

Gavino Joya, 72, of 1614 Eusebio St., Pandacan, filed his complaint before the suspects with Western Police District's general assignments section.

He told GAS investigator PO3 Jayvee Aglipay that he was walking along Escolta Street in Sta. Cruz when "two nice and descent-looking" men told him they were looking for a truck to hire and deliver their fish haul worth P200,000.

The two men, Joya said, even invited him to a restaurant. Two other men and a woman, who introduced themselves as employees of a trucking firm, soon joined them at the restaurant, Joya said.

While eating, the suspects discussed and agreed to go to the firm's office to finalize the deal on the fish delivery.

Joya told police that the suspects even offered to give him a commission.

But two of the suspects, Joya said, told him that as a precaution, they would leave with him their bag containing P100,000 cash.

He said he agreed even when the suspects asked him to give them his watch and ring worth P32,000, and P1,900 cash as assurance that he would return their money.

UNIVERSITY of the Philippines cadets participate in assault training.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Senate proposal makes ROTC training optional

By Christine Avendaño and Nestor B. Burgos Jr.,
PDI Visayas Bureau

A BILL has been filed in the Senate seeking to make the controversial Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) military training program optional for college and university students.

Senate Bill No. 1508, filed by Sen. Francis Pangilinan, proposes that students be also given the option to be involved in civic action and community development work.

Pangilinan said he was more in favor of amending the law that created ROTC rather than abolishing the program.

"While I understand the concern of students who wish to abolish the ROTC for being irrelevant, I think the more prudent approach would be to reexamine it, perhaps make it optional, because there is some good in having military training provided that it is not imposed," the new senator told a news conference.

He said ROTC should be "an option available to the students."

He said that when the ROTC law is amended, it should include programs for students addressing issues such as basic education.

He said that students, for example, could participate in programs that help elementary pupils or pre-schoolers the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic.

College students have been clamoring for the abolition of the ROTC program following the murder of University of Santo Tomas engineering student Mark Welson Chua after he exposed the allegedly rampant corruption in the ROTC.

In Iloilo City, pro-abolition students on Tuesday raised fears of a possible crackdown from school administrators and ROTC officials following the violent dispersal of a rally on Monday.

At least two students were reportedly manhandled when security guards, police interns and ROTC officers shoved protesters at the University of Iloilo (UI).

Apple Gabasa, 18, reportedly was dragged out of the campus by two police interns and pushed by security guards. Rex Tupas, 22, said security chief Rodolfo Vasquez grabbed him by the neck.

Vasquez and the head of the faculty union, Melvyn Ybarzabal, nearly came to blows after Ybarzabal intervened to prevent guards from harming the students.

"They were taking pictures of the protesters and using physical force," said Ybarzabal.

Vasquez, who also confiscated a megaphone from a member of the League of Filipino Students, refused to talk to reporters.

The protest erupted after Ariel Diaz, the Paghamon Party candidate for president, was prevented from speaking in a grand rally for all candidates. Paghamon is one of three political groups vying for seats in today's student council elections.

The university's commission on elections disqualified Diaz for violating the poll body's policy prohibiting candidates from discussing the ROTC issue during the weeklong campaign period.

Bobbie Reyes, dean of student affairs and Comelec adviser, said the ban was enforced to avoid conflict between candidates and officers of the ROTC who were deputized to ensure orderly elections.

"The Comelec has no right to dictate what our platform of government should be," Diaz said. "They cannot be above the Constitution."

Vasquez and dean of discipline Benigno Casio Jr., who are both retired colonels in the military, ordered the dispersal after Paghamon supporters raised placards and urged students to walk out of their classes.

"They have the right to hold a protest but they were clearly disturbing the program," said lawyer Eduardo Reyes, legal adviser of the university's poll body.

About 700 students shouting "Martial Law *sa* UI!" later held an hour-long noise barrage and rally in front of the university gates.

Lorna Gaton, vice president for academic affairs, said the administration would talk with all the political parties to prevent more protest actions.

Founded in June 1947 by the late Philippine Vice President Fernando Lopez, UI is one of the biggest universities in Western Visayas with about 8,000 students.

Old Ospital ng Makati closed

THE OLD Ospital ng Makati (Osmak)on Malugay Street in Barangay Bel-Air will be closed to the public starting Aug. 1 to give way to its transfer to a new four-story building in Barangay Pembo, Makati. Makati Mayor Jejomar C. Binay said all city residents and clients, particularly the holders of the Makati "yellow card," should temporarily go to the Makati Medical Center for their medical and hospital needs.

"I urge the public to bear with us for the meantime as we await the opening of the new Ospital ng Makati," he said.

Binay said the new and modern Osmak, which can be found on Sampaguita Street in Barangay Pembo, will start full operations on Aug. 20.

Binay said that Makati residents and clients can expect better and more efficient medical services in the new hospital, which boasts of highly competent doctors and medical personnel, top-of-the-line hospital equipment and larger facility.

Binay said the new Ospital ng Makati has a 200 bed capacity and features a CT Scan and other modern medical equipment especially in the Ophthalmology Department.

"I am confident that the public will be pleased with the various services and facility to be offered in our new hospital," he said.

CIDG agents inspect the items seized from the suspects, who include George Martin (middle).

VALHANDUMON

24 aliens arrested in stock sale scam

By Alcuin Papa

ABOUT 24 foreigners were arrested on Tuesday for allegedly selling company stocks without the necessary permits in Makati.

PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group head Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto identified two of the suspects as Canadian George Martin and British national Yachub Yadjie Yganeh.

Members of the Philippine National Police arrested the suspects about 2 p.m. Tuesday at their offices on the 29th floor of the Enterprise Tower at 6766 Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas in Makati City.

Gualberto said the suspects were running Goldberg Company, a brokerage firm, and selling stocks.

He said the foreigners were doing business without permits from the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Lawyer Virgilio Pabico, the CIDG's legal counsel, said the raid stemmed from numerous complaints that the company was not registered from foreign clients.

Martin and Yganeh are now detained and are facing charges of violation of RA 8799 or the Securities Regulation Code and the non-payment of the necessary fees and taxes.

Atienza surprises Binondo vendors

By Jerome Aning

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza on Monday asked the city police director to relieve all members of a police community precinct (PCP) in Binondo after he saw that illegal stalls and other obstructions he had ordered removed from the sidewalks last week were still standing.

Atienza made a second surprise inspection of the site Monday morning and found that the sidewalks on Ilaya and Juan Luna streets in Divisoria were still not cleared of stalls, which contributed to the heavy traffic in the area.

The mayor grew more incensed when he discovered that the policemen at the Divisoria PCP, at the intersection of the two streets, had built a shed on a portion of the Juan Luna sidewalk.

Atienza ordered the relief of the substation commander, Chief Insp. Marcelino Pedrozo, and of his men. Their immediate superior is Supt. Juanito de Guzman, Western Police District Station 11 chief.

"I talked to the people in the area and they confirmed to me that these policemen were doing nothing to maintain order in the area," the mayor said. "To make matters worse, the shed they built on the street has no use and is adding to the traffic congestion."

Atienza said De Guzman would be held accountable if the obstructions were not removed on his third visit. He threatened to have all station commanders relieved if they refused to strictly implement his orders to "liberate" the sidewalks.

He also asked members of a volunteer fire brigade whose base was right beside the substation, to immediately dismantle an extension of their office that was also encroaching on the Juan Luna sidewalk.

Law graduate slain by Isetann guard goes home

By Job Belen, PDI
Southern Luzon Bureau

RELATIVES, friends and neighbors of Rolly Arias, 31, sadly welcomed home to Malilipot, Albay, the remains of the law graduate who was shot dead by a security guard of the Isetann Complex in Manila on July 24.

Security guard Francisco Sumbello reportedly shot Arias after the two had an argument on the steps of the complex on C. M. Recto Ave.

Arias was in Manila reviewing for the bar examinations at the San Sebastian College.

"Rolly dreamed of becoming a lawyer," sister Maritess Bigtas told the **Inquirer**.

The youngest and the only male among four siblings, Arias finished his law studies at the Aquinas University of Legazpi in 1998.

He left for Canada after graduation but came back home a year after to prepare for the bar exam.

Arias' death from a shotgun shell shocked his friends and acquaintances.

Lawyer Rodolfo Bonafe Jr., neighbor of the victim in Albay, said Arias could have been the sixth lawyer in this small town. He described Arias as friendly, helpful and meek.

Adrian Amoroso, an intimate friend of the victim, described Arias as thoughtful.

48 projects

LAS PIÑAS City Mayor Vergel "Nene" Aguilar is set to inaugurate 48 new infrastructure projects implemented during the first six months of the year as part of his administration's continuing improvement and development program for the city's 20 barangays.

The projects include 38 road repair and asphalting in 14 barangays of the city, Aguilar said.

Repair and improvement of drainage systems, renovation of schools, constructions of daycare centers, barangay hall and covered court are also among the projects.

Aguilar also said that two modern tricycle terminals were also constructed in Marcos Alvarez in Barangay Talon 1 and in Goodyear Park in Almanza 1.

The modern terminals have clean comfort rooms and a covered waiting area for the passengers and a TV set for entertainment of the passengers and drivers.

Gov't, NGO bring 'gold' to Bagong Silang

BY CECILE G. GARCIA

TALES OF THE CITY

TO the residents of Bagong Silang, Caloocan City, water is gold.

Nita Laurora and her family, who have lived here for 15 years, realize the value of this priceless basic commodity because like the rest, they had always been virtually waterless.

Bagong Silang, a project of the National Housing Authority (NHA), is a government resettlement area with about a million inhabitants.

"The land was granted to us, we own it," says Laurora. Others, she adds, sell their property at a profit and go back to Manila.

Still, Bagong Silang remains overcrowded and the barangay cannot do much to help the population.

Laurora, 44, is a manicurist, a trade she learned through a livelihood program. Her husband is a carpenter. Their 21-year-old son, who should be in college, is a factory worker.

Water shortage, according to Laurora, had been a perennial problem in Bagong Silang. Though NHA had provided two deep wells (no longer functioning now), water was never enough because only those close to the tank could avail themselves of it.

"We would buy water from private sources," says Laurora, "and spend P120 a week or P500 a month for a family of three."

Sometime fights, childish bickering over water, would break out between neighbors. At times it affected the peace and order situation, and Laurora already had her hands full as president of Nagkakaisang Naninirahan sa Mountainside Inc. (Nanami), an association of residents of the "package" where she and her family belong.

Wish fulfilled

Bagong Silang is made up of 10 phases and each phase has six to 10 packages consisting of blocks. About 800 families are in every package.

Laurora says her job is voluntary. It's her last term, but it seems nobody wants to take over.

By and large, it is a thankless job. But last March, Laurora had everything to be thankful for when residents of her neighborhood, a total of 800 families, including hers, finally got their wish. Water would no longer be a major problem.

"We could not believe that it could be done without politics," says Laurora, referring to the red tape usually encountered in dealing with the government.

Bagong Silang's water problem came to an end when the plight of its residents reached the attention of the Foundation for Development Alternatives (FDA), one of 42 partner NGOs of Partnership of Philippine Support Services Agencies Inc. (Philssa), a 5-year-old NGO whose main focus is urban concerns.

Components

While FDA was responsible for initiating the project, providing water for Bagong Silang was actually a joint effort, a partnership, according to Salve Antiquera, project coordinator for Community Partnership for Health.

CPH is a component of the Urban Health and Nutrition Project (UNHP) under the Department of Health.

CPH had worked unsuccessfully with the local government in the past. "This is why DOH invited Philssa to undertake projects for CPH," says Antiquera. The program, she explains, has three components—TB control and management, integrated mother and child health care, and environmental health which includes water system and drainage.

Bagong Silang's water problem was within the jurisdiction of CPH, says Antiquera, but the implementing agency was Philssa.

However, it was FDA that made the recommendation and served as bridge between CPH-Philssa and the residents of Bagong Silang.

Electric wells

"The residents prepared a proposal and gave it to Philssa," recounts Antiquera. "They were asked to canvas for materials and later on present a budget. It was subsequently approved and Philssa allocated P210,000 for it." (Philssa and CPH are funded by World Bank and others).

Planning, processing and implementation took four months, from November 2000 to March 2001.

In March, two deep wells were installed. Run by electricity, these wells speed up and ease the conveyance of water from house to house with the use of a hose.

"Delivery is scheduled," says Laurora. "Every family gets two drums of water three times a week." The water is potable so there's no need to boil it.

It would be free if the wells were run manually. But the residents have to split the cost of maintenance, repair and electricity (plus association fees to Nanami). Still, water expenditure is cut drastically. And even better, there's a steady supply of it.

The Bagong Silang water project is CPH and Philssa's first joint venture. This year alone, Philssa, under national coordinator Ana Teresa de Leon-Yuson, finished 54 projects nationwide in three months.

Philssa is a registered non-stock service network of social development NGOs in urban centers throughout the country. It is engaged in sustainable development programs for urban sectors. Philssa, together with its partner NGOs, is involved in education and training, research, legal service, socio-economic and other technical support and in issue advocacy.

Learning experience

Philssa, according to Antiquera, believes in sustainable achievements and gets its rewards from the direct services it provides the community.

"Its success with CPH on the Bagong Silang project was a learning experience," she says.

"If the proponents did not meet the challenge and did not believe in their cause, if they did not have the courage to pursue it, if they had merely waited, the residents of Bagong Silang would still be waterless."

World Leaders 2001

THE COUNTRY'S top businessmen turn over P19 million in donations to Fernando Zobel de Ayala and lawyer Jose Ma. Mendoza, members of the World Leaders Build. The businessmen donated the amount to help build some 260 Habitat homes for the poor in Pinugay, Rizal. President Macapagal-Arroyo and members of her Cabinet will launch World Leaders Build on Aug. 6.

'Habitat' to build homes in Rizal

THE COUNTRY'S top government, business, media, and civic leaders will gather in Pinugay, Rizal on Aug. 6 to kick off the Philippine end of "World Leaders Build," a worldwide event organized by Habitat for Humanity International to provide decent housing for all.

Business leaders in over 50 countries in five continents will turn out in force to support the event.

In Pinugay, Rizal, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, with Housing Secretary Michael Defensor, will lead Cabinet members, civic groups and business leaders headed by Fernando Zobel de Ayala of Ayala Corp. to build a total of 300 houses for as many needy families identified by Habitat for Humanity.

Beneficiaries of the Pinugay homes earn an average of P6,000 a month. The families live near danger zones such as creeks and canals prone to flooding.

But Zobel, who heads the National Steering Committee for World Leaders Build, hopes to change all that by providing the indigent families with houses they can call their own.

"Owning a decent home is often the fist step in regaining one's dignity and overcoming the cycle of poverty," Zobel said.

Jose Ma. Mendoza, managing director of Habitat for Humanity Philippines, said each family will soon have a house of around 30 square metes made of concrete and galvanized roofing. Habitat will also develop communities in which the homes will be located by providing training and livelihood opportunities for residents.

But the Habitat homes are not for free. Beneficiaries will pay no-profit, no-interest terms for their homes, while donors provide initial funding for the materials needed to build the houses. The money which the beneficiary will remit to Habitat will be used to build more houses for the needy.

In addition, the cost of Habitat homes is dramatically reduced because the labor component, which can account for as much as 30 percent of the cost of a house, is taken up by volunteers.

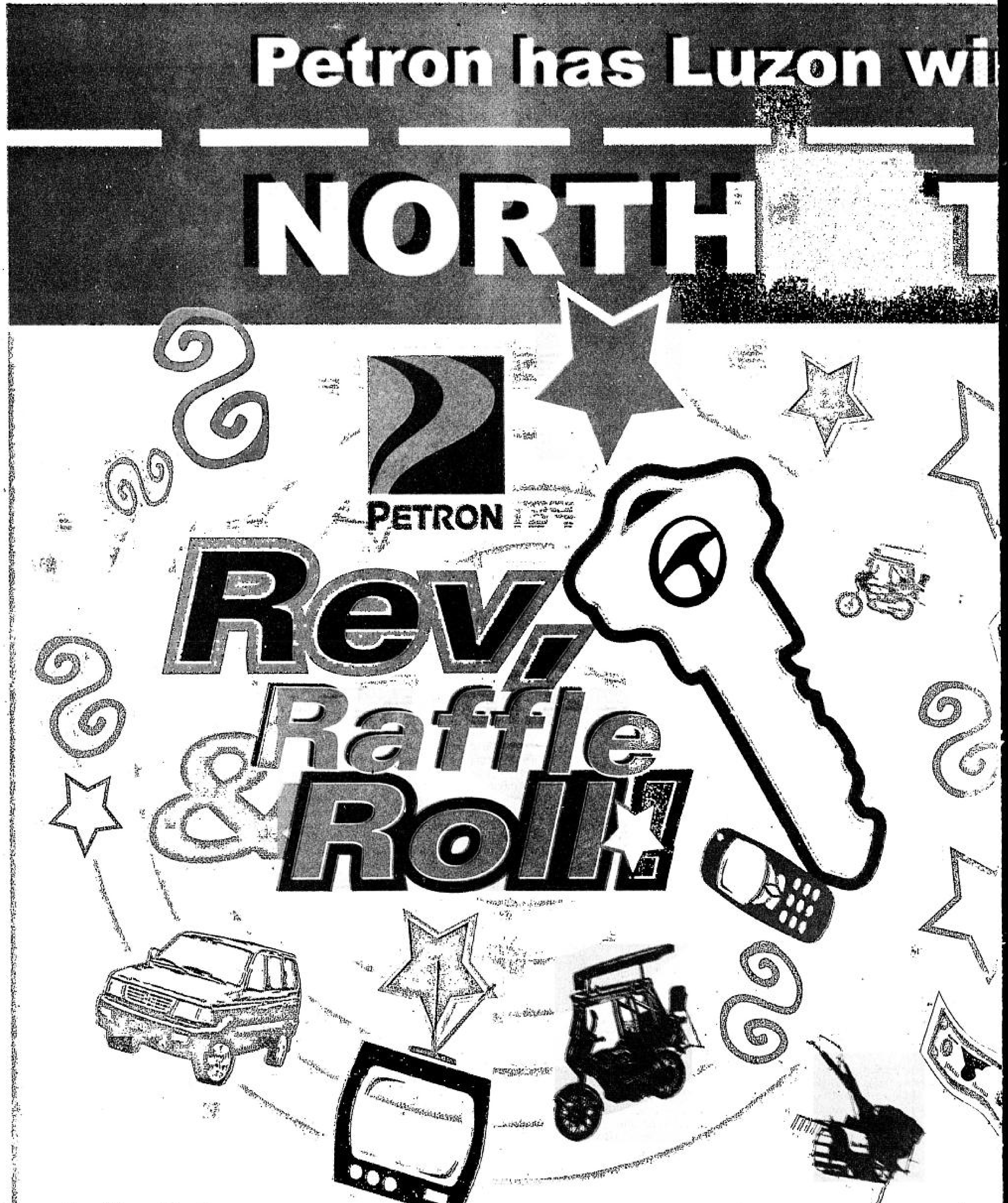
"Among social development projects, Habitat encourages the Bayanihan spirit," Zobel said. "It provides an easy way for many sectors to reach out to the needy."

Mendoza said that to jumpstart World Leaders Build, the Office of the President donated P12 million which was used by the private sector as benchmark to raise funds.

Private organizations have also raised an additional P19 million. Volunteers from all sectors have also committed to donate 13,000 man-days from Aug. 6 to Aug. 11 to help build homes for Habitat beneficiaries.

Habitat for Humanity has been in the Philippines since 1988. Former US president Jimmy Carter will launch World Leaders Build on Aug. 5 in South Korea, together with South Korean President Kim Dae Jung and former Philippine President Cory Aquino.

Members of the Philippine national steering committee of World Leaders Build include Zobel, Secretary Defensor, Guillermo Luz, Robert Kuan, Rina Lopez-Bautista, Pedro Roxas, Marixi Prieto, Roberto Aboitiz, Tony Ng, Margie Moran-Floirendo, Erly de Guzman, Dr. Jose Abueva, Jose Ma. Mendoza, Paolo Benigno Aquino, Frank, Gerry Padilla and Lanao del Sur Gov. Mahid Mutilan.



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See leaflets for complete details.
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JON-JON Gutierrez MANDY NAVASERO

Can Jon-Jon recover, play basketball again?

By Mandy Navasero

FOR the past five months, Juanito Gutierrez Jr., or Jon-Jon, 15, has been lying in his plastic bed like a vegetable.

He is often convulsed with seizures. He is suffering from a rare disease called SSPE, Subacute Sclerosis Panencephalitis, which is said to be the late complication of measles.

Jon-Jon had measles when he was one year old and it was compounded by broncho-pneumonia. Born of poor parents, Jon-Jon was not given sufficient medications.

A week ago, social worker Nimfa Dumago of the Santuario de San Antonio Parish, brought Jon-Jon and his mother, Linda, 48, to the Philippine General Hospital because the boy has broncho-pneumonia.

His case was reevaluated by Dr. Bernadette Chua, a 31-year-old pediatric neurologist fellow from the University of the Philippines. She said Jon-Jon's condition can get better with the proper medicines.

Chua prescribed IVIG (intravenous immune globulin) solution for the degenerative disease that affects the brain due to recurring measles infection.

SSPE can be treated, according to Chua. In international and local medicine, most patients get better when treated, she said.

Vizcarra Pharmaceutical, owned by Victoria Vizcarra-Amalingan and located at the corner of UN Avenue and Mabini Street in Manila, distributes the expensive IVIG solution, of which a 2,500-mg vial costs P4,450.

Jon-Jon needs five vials everyday for five consecutive days. Hopefully, after he takes the medication, Jon-Jon will recuperate and be normal again. But he needs a lot of money to buy the vials.

Good Samaritans who wish to help Jon-Jon may course their donations through the writer at 522-1901 or 522-1905, or at her studio at 1935 Dominga St., near the corner of Buendia Avenue, Pasay City, or through Melon Recto-Silverio at 895-4718.

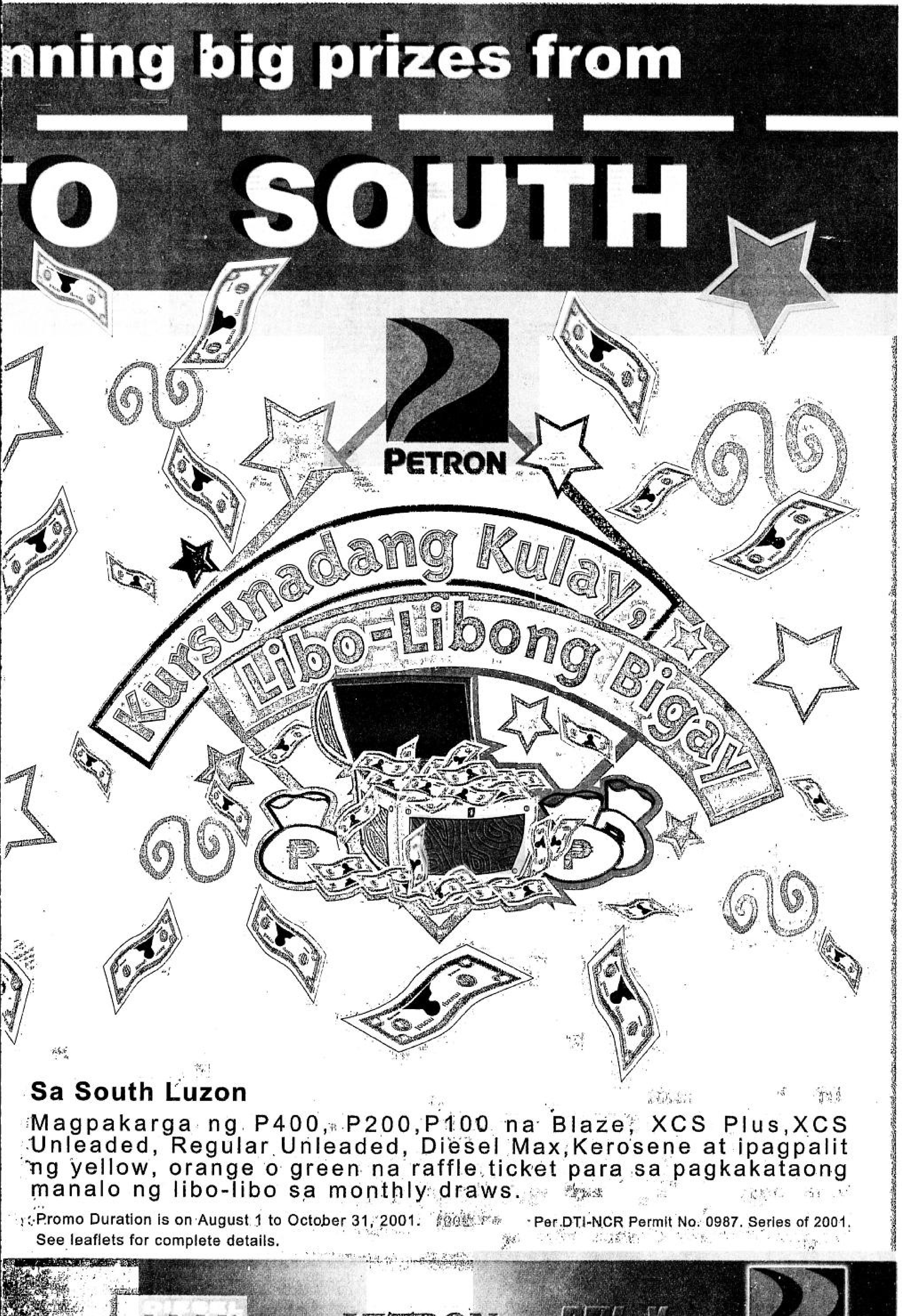
Among those who have committed to help Jon-Jon so far are columnist Belinda Cunanan of this paper, Marites Pineda (one vial), Gloria Angara, and Vizcarra Pharmaceutical which, through its president Francisco Sales, agreed to sell the vial at a discount, from P4,450 to P3,500.

Jon-Jon still needs P87,500 for his medication for the five consecutive days.

Jon-Jon is the seventh of 13 children of Linda, a housewife, and Juanito Sr. who is a temporary family driver with a take home monthly pay of P4,500 monthly.

Four in-laws and seven grandchildren are staying with the Gutierrezes in a 27-square-meter house at 5525 P. Binay Street, Makati City. The 23 residents of this box have to take turns in sleeping and eating. Representatives of Caritas Manila bring them juices and bread three times a week.

Jon-Jon was studying at the Pio Del Pilar Elementary School when he started to have seizures. He was a tall and good-looking boy who liked to play basketball in the neighborhood.



Sa South Luzon

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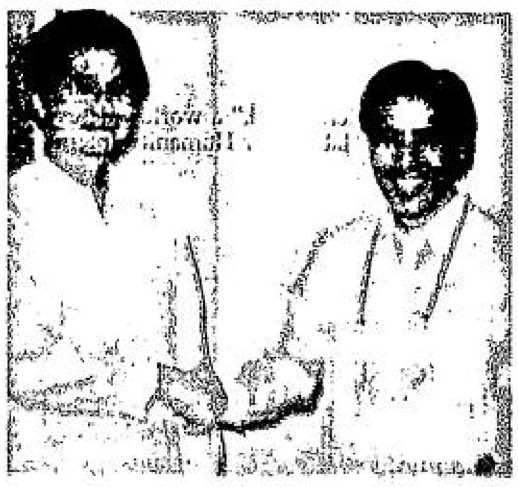
Promo Duration is on August 1 to October 31, 2001. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0987. Series of 2001.
See leaflets for complete details.

PNR PROPERTIES FOR HOUSING

Housing chair Mike Defensor views a map identifying properties of the Philippine National Railways marked as housing sites for informal settlers. Joining the chair aboard the new PNR air-conditioned coaches donated by the Japanese government are (from left) engineer Jose Varquez of PNR, Edgardo Pamintuan, National Housing Authority general manager, Jose Sarasola, PNR general manager, and Armando De Castro, HUDCC secretary general.



'HEALTHY LUNGS' CAMPAIGN

Department of Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit (right) and GlaxoSmithKline Foundation executive director Noel Isberto seal the "Healthy Lungs" campaign agreement with a handshake. The campaign means to disseminate information on the country's top respiratory diseases such as TB, asthma and smoking-related diseases through radio and print ads nationwide.

DREDGER FOR NAVOTAS

Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco (in dark glasses) inspects dredging equipment which the Department of Public Works and Highways lent to his town. The dredger will be used to clean up and deepen the Navotas River, which drains floodwaters into Manila Bay.

Sales success meet

TO HELP direct sales professionals deal with the new marketing challenges, the Direct Selling Association of the Philippines, an organization of companies engaged in the business of personal selling, will hold the Direct Selling Management Conference at the SGV Hall, AIM Conference Center in Makati City on Aug. 9-10.

With the theme "The Direct Sales Discipline," the conference seeks to enhance the performance of direct selling companies, and instruct prospective entrepreneurs as well as marketing professors who wish to know more about the power of direct sales as a distribution channel.

Industry leaders and marketing gurus will share their views on the various aspects of direct sales and will tackle some critical issues experienced by many direct selling companies.

For more information, you mall call the DSAP Secretariat at 864-2673, or e-mail them at dsaphils@mozcom.com.

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7	CLOSED
8	PARU PARONG LIGAW

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5	JURASSIC PARK 3
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3	JURASSIC PARK 3 THX In DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	THE TAO OF STEVE (Phil. Premiere) In DTS DIGITAL SOUND Art Film
5	RED DIARIES In DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6	KISS OF THE DRAGON In DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7	MOULIN ROUGE In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1	MOULIN ROUGE In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON In SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3	CATS & DOGS In DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4	MARTIN NIEVERA LIVE! AUG.23 TO 25 9PM Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	JURASSIC PARK III THX In DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON In DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	CATS & DOGS In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	JURASSIC PARK 3 In DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	MOULIN ROUGE In DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
3 (DTS)	SWORDFISH
4 GOLD (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
6 GOLD (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8 ([illegible])	RED DIARIES
9 ([illegible])	MOULIN ROUGE
10 ([illegible])	CATS & DOGS

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
5	
6 (DTS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	RED DIARIES

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	CATS & DOGS

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	CATS & DOGS
3	RED DIARIES
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	PARU PARONG LIGAW

Metropolis
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RED DIARIES
4	TURN ON
5	CATS & DOGS
6	JURASSIC PARK 3
7	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010/892.3349

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	LABRADOR
2	ALONG CAME A SPIDER

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1	RED DIARIES
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	
A	

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	REPLICANT
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	RED DIARIES

GOTESCO CINEMA

City
(Manila) tel 734.8580

1 (DOLBY)	RED DIARIES
2	RESERVED
3	RESERVED
4	RESERVED
5	CATS & DOGS
6	MOULIN ROUGE
7 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
8 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
9 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RED DIARIES

Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	RED DIARIES
2	RED DIARIES
3	CATS & DOGS
4 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	MOULIN ROUGE
6 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
7 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	RED DIARIES
3	KISS OF THE DRAGON
4	RESERVE
5 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	CATS & DOGS
7 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
8	RESERVE

Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	CATS & DOGS
5 (SDDS)	MOULIN ROUGE

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	RED DIARIES

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	RED DIARIES
Lords	RED DIARIES
Jennet	

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851/533.3856

1	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
2	JURASSIC PARK III
3	RESERVED
4	RED DIARIES

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	JURASSIC PARK 3

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	RED DIARIES
3	BAGANSYA
4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	CATS & DOGS

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	CATS & DOGS
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	JURASSIC PARK 3

Baclaran LRT
LRT CINEMA
tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	JURASSIC PARK 3

Berma
tel 879-2029 or 30

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	RESERVE
3	RED DIARIES
4	KISS OF THE DRAGON

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185/534.2198

1	RED DIARIES
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MOULIN ROUGE
2 (DTS)	RED DIARIES
3 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
4	JURASSIC PARK 3

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) Tel. (049) 411-1146

1	RED DIARIES
2 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3 (DTS)	MOULIN ROUGE
4	JURASSIC PARK 3

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	DR. DOLITTLE 2
2	ATLANTIS
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
3	RED DIARIES
4 (DTS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	RED DIARIES
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	MOULIN ROUGE
5	UNANG TIBOK

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	RED DIARIES
3	MOULIN ROUGE

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	RED DIARIES
3	MOULIN ROUGE

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	DR. DOLITTLE 2
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	PARU PARONG LIGAW

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	RED DIARIES

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RED DIARIES
2 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	RED DIARIES

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	RED DIARIES
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	DR. DOLITTLE 2
3	TOM CATS
4	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 ([illegible])	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	RED DIARIES
3	MOULIN ROUGE
4 ([illegible])	KISS OF THE DRAGON

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4	CATS & DOGS
5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	KISS OF THE DRAGON
7	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	RED DIARIES
9	MOULIN ROUGE
10	CATS & DOGS

ERMITA 536-7809 TO 12

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	MOULIN ROUGE
4	FINDING FORRESTER
5	RED DIARIES
6	CATS & DOGS
7	JURASSIC PARK 3

NOVALICHES 935-3229 TO 31

1	MOULIN ROUGE
2	SOON TO OPEN
3	RED DIARIES
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	KISS OF THE DRAGON
6	CATS & DOGS
7	E. WOUNDS / S. NOVEMBER
8	NARINIG...ANG L8EST/ MILA

IMUS (046) 471-8188

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
3	CATS & DOGS
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	MOULIN ROUGE
6	RED DIARIES

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	FINAL FANTASY
3	DR. DOLITTLE 2
4	POSSESSED
5	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
6	PANINDA

SOON TO OPEN

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THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	RED DIARIES
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	CATS & DOGS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	FINAL FANTASY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	MOULIN ROUGE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	RED DIARIES
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT/EYES WHITE SHOOT
ODEON	JURASSIC PARK 3
ODEON-2	PARUPARONG LIGAW
ROBEN	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
TANDEM-1	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
TANDEM-2	HILIG NG KATAWAN
TIMES	EXIT WOUNDS/MEXICAN
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	RED DIARIES
QUEZON-1	JURASSIC PARK-3
REMAR	JURASSIC PARK-3
REMAR-2	PARUPARONG LIGAW
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
CINEMA-2	RED DIARIES
CINEMA-3	TOM CATS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	PEARL HARBOR
CINEMA-6	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
CINEMA-7	SWORDFISH
CINEMA-8	FINAL FANTASY
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-12	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-14	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-15	RED DIARIES
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	ALONG CAME A SPIDER
CINEMA-2	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-3	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-5	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-6	MOULIN ROUGE
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	RESERVE
CINEMA-2	RESERVE
CINEMA-4	RESERVE
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	NANANABIK
CINEMA-2	JULIETA
CINEMA-4	SCARED

The other...

(From page A23)

the mall and just enter a restaurant to talk to the manager to ask for sponsorship. *Lakasan lang talaga ng loob!* I felt nauseous everyday worrying if I could recoup my investment. Luckily, my efforts paid off. I made P300,000 and got the car I wanted.

D: How do you relax?

K: I'm a movie buff. *Nakakatuwa nga* when I call my *suki na* video shop, *nagpapasahan na ng telepono yung mga* salesladies *kasi kinukulit ko sila na maghanap pa ng bagong* title. I've watched almost all. *Pinipilit ko talaga, "Hindi tingnan niyong maabuti. Siguradong meron pang bago diyan."* Two of my favorite films are "Damage" and "Farewell My Concubine."

D: Do you cook?

K: I love to cook when I have the time. When I have guests at home I enjoy cooking for them. My specialty is pasta. I also bake. They say my cheesecake is yummy. I have this really good recipe for *kare-kare*. I do it from scratch. Nothing instant.

D: So much has been said about your "temper." Would you want to clear up anything?

K: I don't deny that I motivate my staff by scolding them. I want things done right.

Even with my make-up, I do it myself so that I can be sure it's what I want. Some make-up artists get offended when you tell them what to do. I'm emotional in personal matters but not in my work.

It saddens me to see some people who are just beginning and yet *may ere na*. I don't try to please everybody. I don't like wasting my time so I don't go out of my way to be goody-goody. It's either I like you or I don't.

As for criticism, I accept it as long as it has basis. *'Di ko pinapatulan* all the intrigues that come my way. I can read people and sift information.

Personal

HAPPY, happy birthday, Mom. I used to love you without understanding you. After all we've been through lately, I can truly say that I love and understand you. Thanks for never giving up on me, when even that would have been the better option.

Someday soon, I know God will let us come full circle. I'll always be your daughter first and foremost. Through it all, *tayo pa rin*.

LOUIE'S CINEMA

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Bridgit Fonda

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6:25 PM - Kiss of the Dragon
8:35 PM - Kiss of the Dragon
10:45 PM - Kiss of the Dragon

BRIDGET JONES DIARY
opens Wednesday Aug. 8

GET A COPY of the 4th issue of Pelikula: A Journal of Philippine Cinema is one of the beneficiary projects of the LRP Foundation, published jointly with the U-P College of Mass Communication. Special discounts given to Louie's THX members.

Hear the Difference. Feel the Excitement

The other side of Korina

(Last of two parts)

DOLLYWOOD: What else makes you suddenly seem to lose control?

Korina: *Wasak ako pagdating sa* family matters. That really affects me. I'm the only girl. *Puro* brothers. I make it a point to provide for them. Whatever problems they have are also my problems. Sometimes, when **Ted (Failon)** was still with me in my radio show, I would report for work with puffy eyes and Ted knew I was in bad shape so *aalalayan niya ako*. During commercial breaks, *tumutulo lang luha ko* without my knowing but when we were on the air again, I had to sound cheerful again.

D: Don't you feel the pressure that you have to get married already? You have achieved so much in your work. Isn't it high time you settle down and raise a family?

K: I wish we could all live to be over a hundred so that we all have the luxury of time but I don't feel pressured to marry just so I could say I'm married, although I'm dying to have kids. I must say that having been able to deal with being alone for a while makes me want to give more if and when I fall again. There's something about solitude that teaches you a higher degree of love and generosity. You conquer your fear of being alone so when you meet someone you like, you know for sure you're with him because you want to be together and not because you are just afraid to be by yourself.

D: How do you size up men in general?

K: I think all men are basically insecure but they just don't let it show. *Magaling silang magtago. Minsan pa nananadya sila magpaselos* just to test if you really love them. *Buti na lang* I'm not *selosa* at all but monogamy is very important to me.

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

I don't go for looks. A man should be able to carry himself well and talk sense to catch my attention.

D: What naughty things have you done?

K: My classmates and I wanted to skip classes just for the heck of it so one day we all hid inside the trunk of a car and escaped.

D: How about one of the most embarrassing moments of your life?

K: I was still doing the hourly newsbreaks on PTV-4. It was about the death of a world leader so I was kinda tense because I was to read a very important piece of news. At the end of the report, I froze and forgot my name. You know the standard closing line, "This is blah blah for your 6 o'lock report . . ." That was the longest 10 seconds of my life!

D: Any other anecdotes when you were still struggling?

K: There was a time I needed to make a down payment on a car so I thought of mounting a stage play. *Grabe! Ako lahat ang gumawa!* Writing solicitation letters, talking to sponsors, promoting the show, selling tickets etc . . . I would walk in

THE OTHER/A22

She has only . . .

(From page A24)

for me to decide to get him as my manager."

Radha is now visible in the live performance scene. She performs in a band called Dye Vest from Iloilo, with Jed Maddela and Aliya Parcs—Mondays at Ratsky's in Malate, Tuesdays at Strumm's Makati, Thursdays at Dish in Rockwell and Saturdays at Conservatory of Peninsula Manila.

"Two months ago, Ronnie asked me if I wanted to do band gigs because there was this band from Iloilo. Since I wasn't really busy, I said yes."

She admits, however, that she's scared to go solo, yet she is also determined to make a name for herself.

"It comes with a certain kind of maturity. I just felt I was ready. Like everything, I know there's an upside and a downside to being a solo performer.

Being independent

"The upside is that when you go onstage, you only have to worry about yourself. You have more control of your performance.

"The downside is you have no else to blame but yourself. When all else fails, there's only you. You know where the problem lies."

Although she now lives independently, Radha has the support of her parents. Her mom is former Sunday Inquirer Magazine artist Gij Ramos.

"What's great about our relationship is that my parents just let me do my thing," Radha says. "I've been independent for the longest time I can remember.

"My mom gives me her all-out support. She tells me straight up if she feels bad about a particular performance. I can always count on her to build me up. She doesn't need to criticize me because I criticize myself."

Maturing

Radha listens to a lot of R&B music so her repertoire is filled with Aretha Franklin, Chaka Khan and Tina Turner. She also dishes out the hits of Lauryn Hill and Destiny's Child.

"As you mature as a performer, you find what suits your voice," she maintains.

When she's not busy performing, Radha updates her journal, listens to music and takes care of her two dogs.

When she was still with Kulay, she used to string words and melodies together. "The songs are still with me. Part of the plan is for me to do a solo album and we might just include one of my compositions. That will be great."

Doesn't the granddaughter of Lolita Rodriguez have any plans to try out acting, too?

"I know Ronnie has a lot of other plans for me," Radha says. "This is just the beginning."

BEAUTY salon owner Ellen Lising (center) poses with her celebrity guests (from left) beauty queen-actress Evangeline Pascual, singer Selina Sevilla, former Binibining Pilipinas title holder Daisy Reyes and teenstar Joanna Gonzales.

Celebrities grace salon opening

CELEBRITIES graced the recent formal opening ceremony of the sixth branch of Ellen's Salon in Libis, Quezon City. The said event coincided with owner Ellen Lising's 22nd anniversary in the beauty business.

Guests of honor were Department of Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon and wife Mayor Kate Gordon.

Others who graced the affair were teenstar Joanna Gonzales, sex siren Stella L, sultry crooner Selina Sevilla and beauty queen-actress Daisy Reyes. They were the featured "Women of Success" during the event. The ladies paraded before the guests in figure-hugging outfits created by fashion designer Rex D.

Beauty queen-turned-actress Evange-line Pascual hosted the event.

Stand-up comedienne Rubi Rubi dished out her brand of antics which delighted the guests.

Four models of the Professional Kiddie and Teen Models Association of the Philippines started the mini-fashion show which was the highlight of the affair.

Ellen's children—daughters Joy, Janice and Jezzel and son Jasper—gave touching messages to their mother which made many of the guests teary-eyed.

Alpha Records artists Selina Sevilla entertained the crowd with a few Latin numbers, before she rendered her signature hit, "Nilunok Kong Lahat."

Ellen hopes that with the newly opened branch added to her beauty chain, she can fulfill her lifetime dream of making the Filipina eternally beautiful.

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Renée Zellweger Colin Firth & Hugh Grant

It's Monday
morning, Bridget
has woken up
with a headache,
a hangover
and her boss.

BRIDGET JONES'S DIARY

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1	2	3
ALONG CAME A SPIDER - P13 11:30, 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10	CATS & DOGS - GP 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40	JURASSIC PARK 3 - P13 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
KISS OF THE DRAGON - R 18 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	JURASSIC PARK 3 - P 13 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20	MOULIN ROUGE - R 18 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

Matinee: P80, Mon.-Fri, 11:10 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

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Why do women find this man so irresistable?
DONAL LOGUE
THE TAO OF STEVE

PHILIPPINE PREMIERE
Why do women find this man so irressistable?
THE TAO OF STEVE

Dex (Donal Logue) is a lovable kindergarten teacher who has extraordinary success with women, and a sexual appetite to match. Women go crazy for him, and men admire his finely-tuned romantic philosophy. The only woman who is not wooed by his charms is Syd (Greer Goodman), an old college friend. THE TAO OF STEVE is a light and spunky romantic comedy directed by Jenniphr Goodman.The film, and Logue's role in it, got the Outstanding Performance Special Jury Prize at Sundance 2000.

"ONE OF THE MOST PLEASURABLE FILMS AT SUNDANCE & ONE OF THE MOST DISARMING ROMANTIC COMEDIES I'VE SEEN IN YEARS."
-Glenn Kenny, PREMIERE

"HILARIOUS & HEARTFELT! DONAL LOGUE'S KNOCKOUT PERFORMANCE SHOULD MAKE HIM A STAR."
-Peter Travers, ROLLING STONE

"A WONDERFULLY WITTY ROMANTIC COMEDY THAT HAS BOTH CRITICS & AUDIENCES RAVING!"
-JonathanForeman, NEW YORK POST

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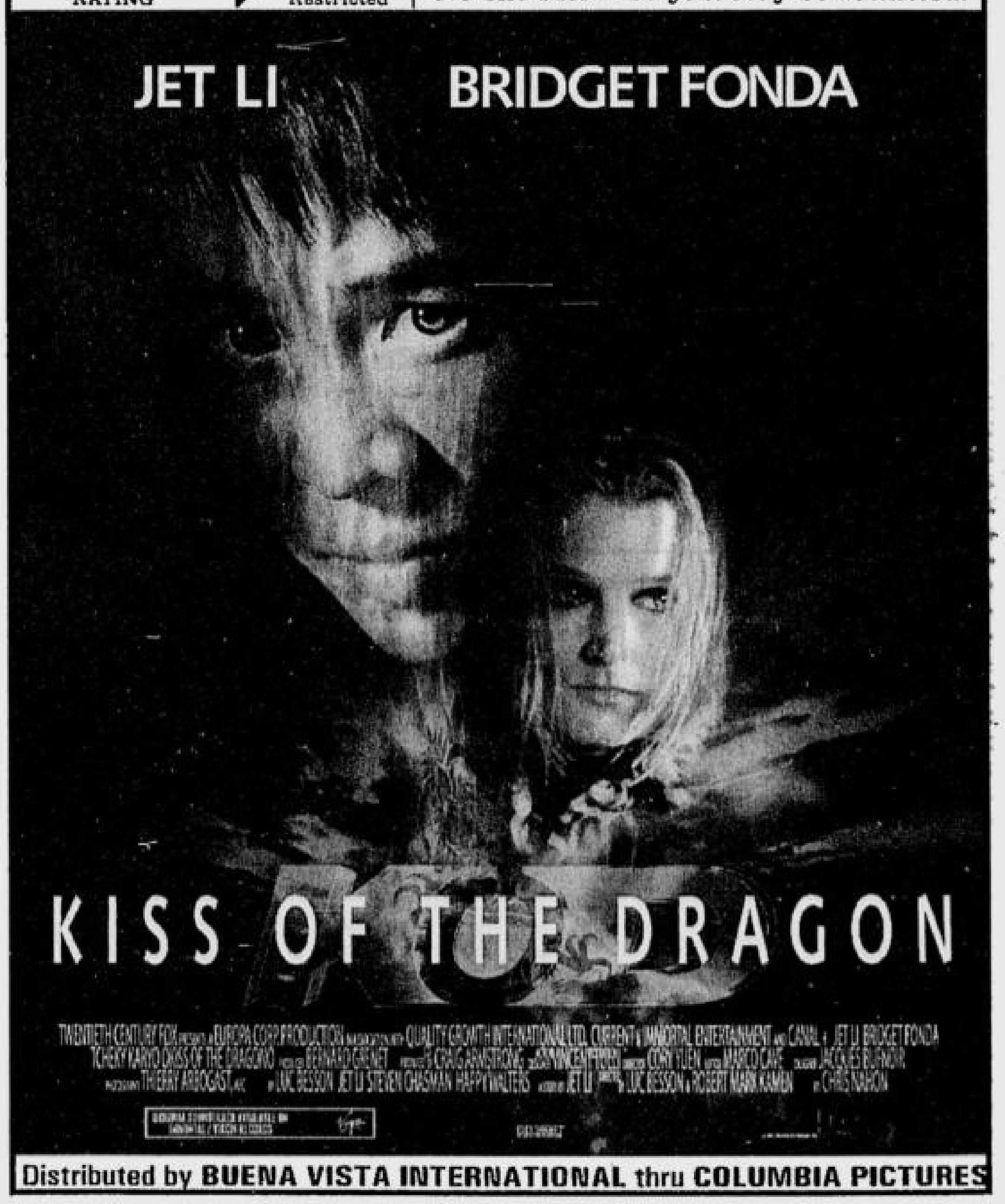

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Filling the need for tapes of outstanding Filipino films

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THESE past weeks, we've been getting more than the usual number of queries from film buffs both here and abroad about where they can buy videotape copies of outstanding Filipino movies by the likes of **Brocka, Bernal, De Leon, Romero**, etc.

Our standard reply is that we head for the video shops at Virra Mall for our own "quality" "films on tape" needs, but some people say that they haven't found much there. Any other sources?

Last week, we were with a number of film people and we asked for tips in this regard. Alas, all that most of them could come up with was our own Virra Mall advisory.

Maybe the trick is to give the Virra Mall shops a longer and more detailed look. When we're looking for tapes of good movies, we go through hundreds of them to find maybe four or five really good ones.

What about, you, dear reader? Do you have of a source of good Filipino films on tape that most people don't know about? Tell us, and we'll pass the information on to the growing number of people who've been asking us.

By the way, the growing interest in good Filipino movies should get a film-savvy entrepreneur to think about going into this new kind of service. There appears to be quite a demand out there for tapes of Filipino film classics, so somebody could turn a tidy profit servicing that need.

Royalties will have to be paid to producers, of course, but there should be enough left over from entrepreneurs' while. Any takers?

Why bad movies make money

"Why," asked a member of the audience at a recent film forum," do bad movies make money?" Good question!

First, quite a number of people go to the movies to relax, to escape. They don't want to think, to be bothered, to face up to reality. They just want two hours of fun, and this is what some bad movies give them.

Second, some bad movies are very well promoted. Their publicity is so good and pervasive that people feel practically compelled to view them, just to see what all the fuss is about—and to be among the first to talk about the movies at home, in school or at the office. That's a status symbol in these parts, as you know.

Third, the bad movie topbills the viewer's favorite star. Some local moviegoers are very loyal to their idols, and are prepared to patronize star's movies more than once, just to boost its showing at the box office. How loyal can you get?!

Fourth, the bad film is a sequel, and some people watch sequel's because they have "brand name appeal," and you know how we go for name brands. If the sequel turns out to be lousy, well, worse things have happened, it's only a movie, life goes on, no sweat, etc.

Fifth, some viewers dote on specific film types and are prepared to see just about any movie that conforms to their preferred genre. Thus, action film buffs will sit through the nth rehash of a tired, old revenge or "global domination" plot, as long as it has the regulation number of fight or chase scenes, plus special effects galore.

Sixth, a number of viewers may not even know—or care—that the movie they're watching is bad. This is the dream combination of low expectations and even lower production values that keep quickie move producers happy, even as they sneer at viewers' terrible taste.

Unluckily for them, however, some moviegoers have become less abysmally slap-happy to please. Plus, movie ticket prices have gone up so much that people have become more selective when it comes to the movies they choose to see.

Bad movies will continue to be made, but these will be fewer people who will patronize them, so fewer lousy flicks will be churned out. That's one happy prospect to look forward to, at least!

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THE COLOR of Radha's music is influenced by her grandfather, former actor Eddie Arenas.

RADHA WITHOUT KULAY

She has only just begun

By Leah Salterio

SHE WAS named after a mythical goddess. Her grandfather is veteran actor Eddie Arenas and her grandmother is the great dramatic actress Lolita Rodriguez.

But when Radha decided to pursue a show biz career, she took the musical route and embarked on a singing career.

Long before she became a member of Ryan Cayabyab's 14K group of young singers, Radha was already displaying her flair for singing. She would sing in family gatherings and even in school at St. Theresa's College in Quezon City.

"When I was in grade school, I'd sing in class even without a minus-one tape," Radha recalls. "I was not embarrassed to sing even in front of many people. I really wanted to become a performer. I never imagined doing anything else."

Radha claims she got her singing talent after her paternal grandfather, the former actor Eddie Arenas whose real name is Eddie Cuadrado.

"He recorded a single when he was young and whenever we get the chance to be together, we would jam and sing the songs that he likes," the doting granddaughter says.

After two years with 14K, Radha became part of the popular band Kulay, when she was only 15.

Learning

"I was big for my age that's why people didn't look at me as a teenager when I started doing gigs with Kulay," she says.

Radha considers being with Kulay a "great experience" which she shared with Boom Dayupay, David Yu, Diego Catabay (now with Legit Misfits) and the late Jeannie Oakman.

"I was with the band for eight years and I learned so much," she allows. "We put our hearts in everything that we do. We went around the country and toured the United States and England. It was hard, yet it was a fun, learning experience. In order to be sane and happy, we continued to look at the positive in every experience that we did."

Last year, however, Kulay disbanded and Radha decided it was time for her to go solo.

"I don't think anybody planned for the band to disband. It's easy for them to get another singer and continue.

"When people from the industry found out I was going solo, they approached me. I had several meetings with some but nothing really materialized."

Deciding

Talent manager Ronnie Henares offered her a solo management contract four years ago, but it was only last year when the two finally met.

"A friend of mine gave him (Ronnie) my number and when we met, I liked him at once. He's very honest and straightforward. It was not hard

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BUSINESS

RAUL O. MARCELO, Editor ▨ CORRIE S. NARISMA, Assistant Editor

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Intel still bullish, expands RP unit

BY ABIGAIL L. HO

INTEL Corp., the world's biggest chipmaker, will expand its research and development facility in the Philippines to become the first test and manufacturing site for its newest technology, Intel president and chief executive Craig Barrett said yesterday.

Barrett was in Manila to launch Intel's latest line of processors, which are based on 0.13 micron technology to create the world's smallest microchips.

"Intel's newest manufacturing technology—based on 0.13 micron circuits—gives Intel the world's smallest, fastest transistors at reduced fabrication costs," Barrett said.

He said the local unit Intel Philippines "plays a key role in supplying global demand for our fastest processors with this assembly and test responsibility."

Barrett added that with the major role that the country plays in Intel's worldwide operations, the company was going to infuse more investments here, especially for research and development (R&D).

Barrett said the 0.13 micron process technology will pave the way for fast microprocessors that will allow high-performance, compact and even wireless computing systems.

Intel has earmarked $11.5 billion for capital expenditures this year, allowing it to develop and introduce new products. Of this, $7.5 billion is earmarked for worldwide expansion. The country has a share of around $1 billion of that total, but most has been devoted to manufacturing.

Barrett also met President Macapagal-Arroyo, who witnessed a signing of a memorandum of understanding between Intel and the Department of Science and Technology to jointly develop "mobile IT (information technology) classrooms."

The classrooms are fully air-conditioned buses with the latest in IT equipment, which visit remote schools and train teachers and students about the latest in IT.

Barrett said Intel was committed to providing a grant to cover software and hardware requirements for at least two buses this year.

"We are very happy with our operations in the Philippines, and around the world and the countries we operate in, we take great pride in giving something back to the community," Barrett said.

Such investments in education he said would help Intel's future expansion by helping train "highly educated Philippine workers."

BARRETT

Citicorp, Merrill Lynch leaving RP stock market

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO
AND ELENA R. TORRIJOS

CITICORP Securities International (RP) Inc., the local stock brokerage unit of American banking giant Citibank N.A., and Merrill Lynch Securities (Philippines) Inc. have joined the growing number of foreign brokers deciding to shut down their Philippine trading operations.

INQUIRER sources said Citicorp was the latest foreign broker to be shaken out of the local stock market, which has long been suffering from dwindling trade volumes and a freefall in prices.

Philippine Stock Exchange president Ramon T. Garcia yesterday confirmed that Citicorp nominee Omar Cruz had sent a notice to the exchange that the company would stop its trading operations by end-August.

Officials of Merrill Lynch were still meeting with PSE officials as of press time yesterday.

Another source disclosed that Merrill Lynch last Friday asked the PSE to send an auditor to go over its books and ensure the brokerage firm's orderly closure.

To-date, however, Merrill Lynch has yet to file with the exchange its application for a suspension of operations.

In the first five months of this year, Merrill Lynch Securities Philippines Inc. stood as the country's No. 1 broker in terms of market transaction, accounting for 7.9 percent of the total value turnover.

Citicorp and Merrill Lynch are the 7th and 8th foreign brokerage houses to fold up their stock trading operations since the start of the year, after BNP Paribas, Securities 2000, UOB Securities, Nomura Securities, Orion Squire Capital Inc. and OCBC Securities.

Sources said the shakeout would likely continue amid the continuing difficult environment. The local stock market, the worst performing bourse in Asia last year, has seen a further thinning out of investor participation this year.

"I think this is a cleaning up," Garcia said of the foreign brokers' shutting down their operations.

Garcia said Citicorp's nominee explained that the company was shelving its trading operations because the Citibank group wanted a "shift of emphasis" to other businesses.

Citibank is one of the biggest foreign banks operating in the country and is very active in lending to corporations and high net worth individuals as well as in investment banking and credit card businesses.

Other brokers said the suspension of Citicorp's operations would not be a big loss to the country because parent firm Citibank was still active in its core banking businesses.

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CURRENCIES

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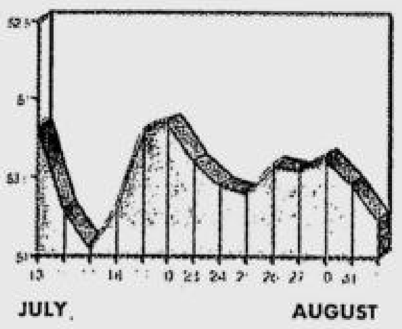


GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

P53.77 = $1
As of 5 p.m., August 1, 2001

¥124.74 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 124.74 as of 5 p.m., August 1, 2001

GOLD:$266.70/267.20 per ounce Hong Kong, August 1, 2001

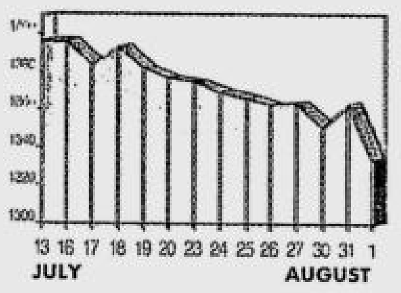
August 1, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.141813	1.000000	53.5260
Japan	Yen	0.009131	0.007997	0.4280
United Kingdom	Pound	1.627541	1.425400	76.2960
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.146403	0.128220	6.8631
Switzerland	Franc	0.661078	0.578972	30.9901
Canada	Dollar	0.744823	0.652316	34.9159
Singapore	Dollar	0.633461	0.554785	29.6954
Australia	Dollar	0.579600	0.507614	27.1705
Bahrain	Dinar	3.028843	2.652661	141.9863
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.304484	0.266667	14.2736
Brunei	Dollar	0.630836	0.552486	29.5724
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000121	0.000106	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.024985	0.021882	1.1713
UAE	Dirham	0.310951	0.272331	14.5768
Korea	Won	0.000883	0.000773	0.0414
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.875800	46.8781
Germany	Mark	0.511291	0.447789	23.9684
France	Franc	0.152450	0.133516	7.1466
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453781	0.397421	21.2724
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.063647	3.4068
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021711	1.1621
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000452	0.0242
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.147299	7.8843
Portugal	Escudo	0.004987	0.004368	0.2338
Spain	Peseta	0.006011	0.005264	0.2818
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.021711	1.1621
Ireland	Punt	1.269739	1.112037	59.5229

STOCK MARKET

Shares set new 9-month low

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES ended sharply lower yesterday on heavy foreign selling, with the main index setting a nine-month closing low, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 29.18 points, or 2.1 percent, at 1,333.71, its lowest closing level since Oct. 31, when it ended at 1,287.85. The index had finished 0.9 percent higher Tuesday.

"When 1,370 was broken, it triggered a new wave of selling. Most players are simply cutting losses," said Enrique Sta. Ana, associate director for sales at Vickers Ballas Securities.

"Maybe fund managers sold Philippine stocks before taking their vacation, also because they can shift to Indonesia where there is a bigger market and a bigger chance for gains."

The market had lost 10.76 percent so far this year while the Jakarta stock market had gained 6.67 percent in the year to date. *AP, Reuters*

Sy buys 51% of Belle unit

RETAIL tycoon Henry Sy has finalized a deal with property and gaming firm Belle Corp. to acquire a 51-percent stake in the latter's spin-off leisure estate unit Highlands Prime Leisure Properties Inc. for P2.5 billion.

Belle corporate secretary Bayani Tan yesterday disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that the company has signed a memorandum of agreement confirming Sy's investment in Highlands Prime.

Sy's investment will be made through Sysmart Corp., which is part of the SM group, developer and operator of the biggest shopping mall empire in the country. The agreement calls for an initial payment of about P250 million by Sysmart.

The retail tycoon has long been a strategic investor in Belle with a 25-percent direct stake. His son, Hans Sy, sits as vice chair of Belle.

The plan is for Belle to spin off more than 600 hectares of core property assets—consisting of subdivision lots and unsold condominium units in Tagaytay Highlands International Golf Club Inc. in Tagaytay City, Cavite and Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club Inc. in Batangas—into this newly created subsidiary Highlands Prime.

Another 10 percent in the Highlands Prime will be offered to Belle's existing shareholders and to the public through a maiden offering originally targeted within the third quarter of this year. On the other hand, other big and foreign investors are expected to join Belle and Sy in the new development.

Belle confirmed in a separate disclosure earlier that there were negotiations with other groups keen on investing in the project, namely Keppel Land Inc., the local property unit of the Keppel group of Singapore, tobacco magnate Lucio Tan and Geronimo Velasco, chair of publicly listed Republic Glass Holdings Corp. and the former energy minister during the Marcos regime.

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Power behind the throng

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IF the husband of Gloriaetta, Miguel Arroyo, really took that P50-million bribe, he must be the most stupid First Gentleman we ever had in this country.

He even beats the likes of . . . let me see . . . well, nevermind. Alright, *nga pala*, he is the first and only First Gentleman we ever had. Hopefully, the one and the only! I'm just kidding, Loren.

Maybe that's why, of all people, even with thousands of "honorable secretaries" in this cute administration, it is the First Gentleman who often figures in money rumors.

In business circles, they say he can worm his way around the official throngs of decision-makers. This used to be the function of the power behind the throne, meaning, the First Ladies and . . . well, the others.

Why does Mike get so caught in nasty rumors, he is getting to be known as Mike the Knife? Maybe we are not used to having a man as the power behind the throng.

* * *

IN media, anyway, that alleged P50-million bribe already earned the label of a scandal. Actually, it started as a rumor. Electronic rumor! You know—cell phone text message!

But as I said, if Mike the Knife really took the money, he is stupid. And my contacts in business readily give him more credit than that. Forgodsakes, he is a lawyer!

Supposedly, that P50-million bribe should take back two presidential vetoes for two bills giving two firms two telecom franchises. You know—wholesale?

According to Laar . . . *este*, Nani Perez himself, who is the justice secretary, which nevertheless does not automatically make him the lawyer of Mike, it is not logical.

Nani says that only Congress can take back the veto. In other words, nobody in the Palace, not even Gloriaetta, can do it. Well, at least not legally.

* * *

SO why would anybody pay somebody in the Palace for something that's not supposed to be done by the Palace?

Well, mainly because it is illegal! And that's why it is even called a "bribe," dear sir. Duh!

Actually, Nani is only trying to defend his boss, Gloriaetta, and not Mike, although nobody is accusing Gloriaetta of anything. To me it's a bit too defensive.

But let's stretch Nani's logic. The rumors are not logical, only because P50 million is such a small amount for such an impossible job. Imagine, taking back a veto!

Consider also the kind of money, a huge fortune, actually, which those bills, theoretically, could bring to the proponents. That P50 million is peanuts. *Sunog pa*!

You see, the bills would have created a monopoly-clearing house for the entire telecom industry in the country. It's like a corrupt traffic cop. *Kotong* here, *kotong* there.

* * *

MOREOVER, if Mike got the money, and he did not even bother to find out what the vetoed bills were all about, he must be the most stupid influence peddler in the world.

For if he took the, ahh, well, "assignment," he could easily have figured out whose toes he would be stepping on. They are the big toes of business giants, I tell you.

I refer of course to such pushover figures in business as Manuel Pangilinan of PLDT and Smart, and Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala of Globe.

On the side, he must also contend with the Lopez group of Bayantel, not to mention the wily taipan John Gokongwei Jr. of Digitel. Sure, they are all wimps!

* * *

IMPORTERS must have a reason for going to court to stop DTI from raising tariff on cement. They say it's for the consumers. It's up to you if you want to believe them.

But I was playing around not with myself but with figures from the Bureau of Standards, the Philippine Ports Authority and the cement industry. They showed me that the biggest reason is money. Lots of money!

The landed cost of imported cement comes up to P86 per bag. Importers then sell the cement at the same price as the locals, or at P135 to P150 per bag. Now bear with me.

In past 12 months alone, cement importation reached more than 2 million bags already. At a profit margin of between P49 and P64 per bag, the importers made a killing of between P100 million and P135 million. In only 12 months!

* * *

WHO are they? Most of them are family-owned companies, hiring only a few workers, most probably even including the family pet.

For instance, there's Cohaco Trading Corp., holding office at 250 Ibuna St. in San Juan. It has all of 20 workers.

It's stockholders are Napoleon, Estrella, Ferdinand, Christopher, Dorothy Ann, Marjorie Catherine. All of them have one family name—Co.

The same family has another cement importing firm called NGC Land Corporation. This company has the same address as Cohaco's in San Juan.

Arizona Realty Corporation, on the other hand, is owned by the Tan family in Sampaloc. It employs a grand total of six people.

To think, they are killing the cement industry.

* * *

ACCORDING to news reports, which quoted organizations, which, in turn, support the cement importers, DTI should not raise the import tariff on cement.

And why is that? Because some of the local cement companies are still making money. In short, they're not yet dead.

The reports cited three companies, which are actually owned by foreign groups, as the money makers in the local cement industry.

They did not say that, last year, 12 of the 19 local cement firms reported losses of P5.2 billion. In 1999, also, 12 of the 19 reported losses of P7.7 billion.

Those firms need the safety measure of higher tariff, not those making money. I mean, why wait for them to die? Only thousands upon thousands will lose their jobs, is that it?

RP seen to get $200M in new World Bank loan

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE WORLD Bank has earmarked $200 million for a new program loan with the Philippine government, which will be anchored on tax administration reforms.

The new facility, to be called public finance management reform loan, will replace the $400-million banking sector reform loan that was terminated early this year.

Finance Undersecretary Juanita Amatong said the government was amenable to the size of the loan and that it might go for the new facility instead of pursuing a public sector reform loan program, as earlier planned.

Amatong, however, did not say whether the government would push for a counterpart financing of a similar amount as was done in the banking sector loan, whose original amount of $600 million was shared by the World Bank and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

Although tied to specific reforms, the proceeds of the program loan will be used to help finance the deficit starting next year.

Amatong said negotiations with the World Bank for the new loan would start this month.

The finance undersecretary said the public finance management reform loan would be anchored on improvements in tax administration while the public sector reform loan focused on the reorganization of the bureaucracy.

The World Bank earlier said it was open to extending a new program loan to the Philippine government after it had agreed, upon the request of the Macapagal administration, to cancel the remaining $400-million banking sector reform loan early this year.

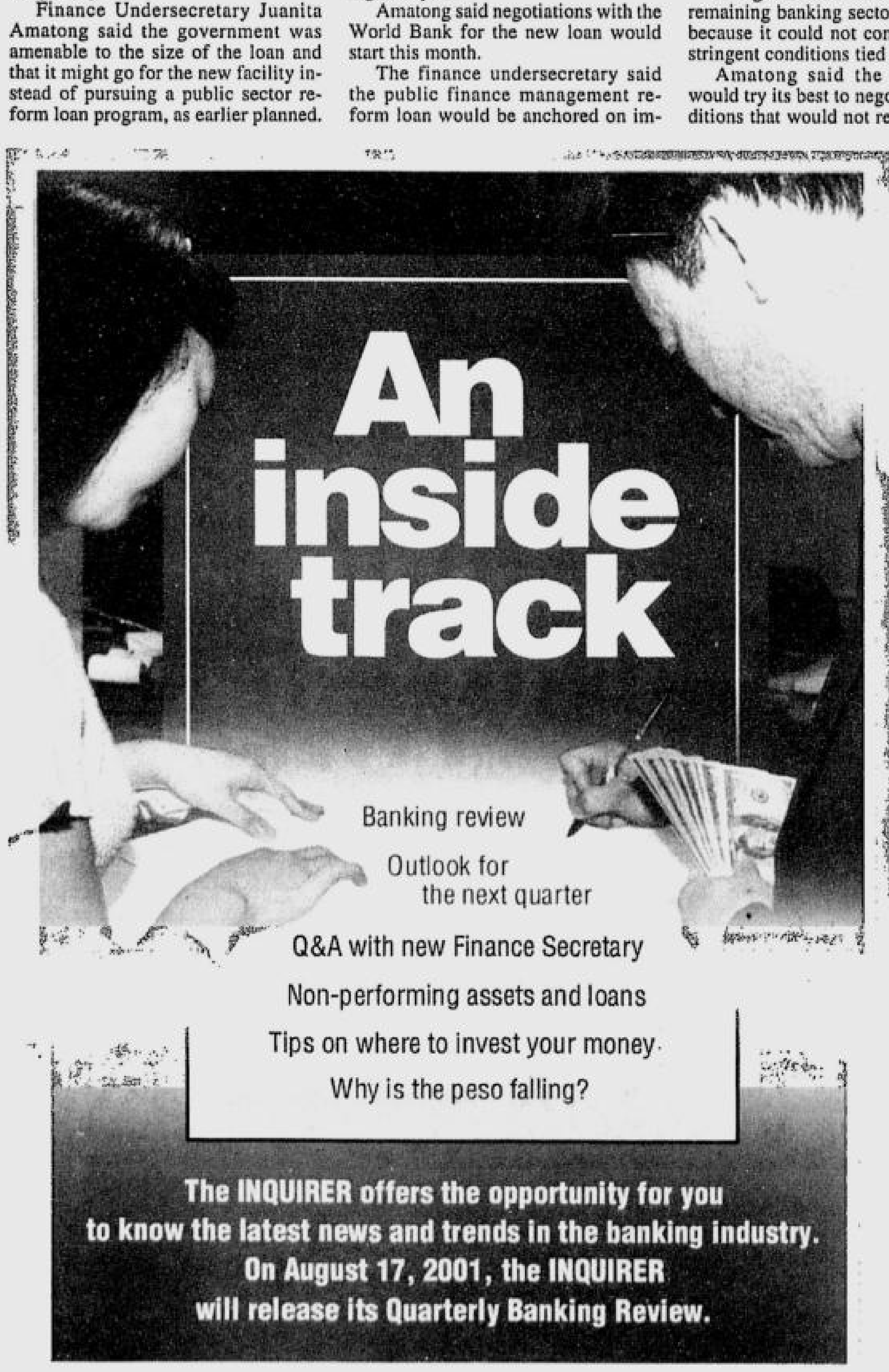
The government had cancelled the remaining banking sector reform loan because it could not comply with the stringent conditions tied to the loan.

Amatong said the government would try its best to negotiate for conditions that would not require legislation because this was beyond the control of the national government.

Also, she said the government would avoid committing itself to conditions that were not doable in the medium term.

The statements were made in view of the stringent conditions tied to the banking sector loan that include the full privatization of Philippine National Bank.

The $600-million banking sector reform loan approved in late 1998 and co-financed by Japan Bank for International Cooperation also called for the amendment of the Central Bank Act and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. charter.



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Shell, Caltex posted profits in 1st semester

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PILIPINAS Shell Petroleum Corp. and Caltex Philippines Inc. reported a financial turnaround in the first semester.

Pilipinas Shell, which suffered a P234-million net loss in the first semester last year, registered a net income of P792 million in the same period this year.

Caltex, which lost P300 million in January to June last year, posted a net income of P100 million this year.

"We had quite a strong market position in most of the first half and we have made gains in the retail and commercial markets," Pilipinas Shell chair Oscar Reyes told reporters.

Reyes said Shell maintained its leadership in the lubricants market and gained share in the liquefied petroleum gas market.

"We had some new industrial accounts and our Shell Tollway Plazas, which were launched in December 2000, have started to pick up in both the North and South Luzon Tollways," Reyes added.

Reyes also pointed out that Shell Velocity maintained its lead in the premium gasoline category.

In a separate interview, Caltex country chair Nicholas Florio said the company's margin was better "but we need to do better than that."

Florio said Caltex was aiming for a net income of between P800 million and P1 billion for the entire year.

He said the company management realized that it was hard to attain the target and that it would aim for a "more realistic figure."

Florio said Caltex would be investing about $50 million to put up new service stations.

"We will also go ahead with the expansion of our Star Marts (or the convenience stores in Caltex service stations)," Florio added.

On Monday, Petron Corp. said it registered P513 million in net profit for the first half of 2001, a modest recovery from the P628 million in net loss in the same period last year.

Petron president Motassim A. Al-Ma'ashouq told shareholders during the company's annual meeting that the improved performance was due to the relatively stable crude prices, which eased operating costs.

"However, the peso exchange rate has remained volatile (and has) eroded some of the gains we might have realized," he said.

Shell and Caltex also talked about moves to improve their positions in the LPG market.

Reyes said Shell would be putting a stronger focus on the branded sales of LPG.

"There are problems in terms of illegal refilling and the pirating of Shellane cylinders but we are addressing this problem," Reyes said.

Florio said that Caltex, for its part, would spend $4 million for an LPG depot in Cebu.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, Aug. 1, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	67.5	67.5	67	67.5	178,700
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	35.5	35.5	34.5	34.5	34,500
First E-Bank Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	5,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	209	209	206	208	21,870
Philippine National Bank	46	47.5	46	47	529,100
Phil. Savings Bank	29	30	29	30	16,200
Security Bank Corp.	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.25	5,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.75	24.75	24.75	24.75	41,100
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	30,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	2,270,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	244	244	238	238	140
Manulife Financial Corp.	1560	1585	1560	1585	5,420
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1325	1335	1325	1325	5,090
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	38	38	38	38	22,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.47	0.47	780,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	665	665	650	660	3,570
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	12,270,000
Piltel	0.55	0.55	0.5	0.5	190,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	50,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	670	670	630	630	74,170
Ivantage Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	140,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.032	0.032	0.031	0.032	10,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	36.5	36.5	36	36	29,400
Manila Electric Co. B	44.5	44.5	42.5	42.5	774,200
Petron Corp.	1.88	1.88	1.78	1.8	5,173,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	13,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	25,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	60,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	55,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.18	1.18	1,016,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.02	2.04	2.02	2.04	14,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	2,552,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.5	109,500
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	28.5	28.5	28	28	2,500
RFM Corp.	2.3	2.38	2.3	2.32	3,001,000
San Miguel Corp. A	42.5	43	42.5	43	115,700
San Miguel Corp. B	56	56.5	56	56	258,800
Universal Robina Corp.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	164,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	20,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	300,000
Ayala Corp.	6.1	6.1	6	6	7,786,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.54	1.54	1.52	1.52	133,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11	11	10.75	10.75	800
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.14	1,030,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	14,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2	2	2	2	20,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.25	0.25	470,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.82	1.84	1.76	1.76	8,586,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	800,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13	1,000,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	139,500
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	8,480,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	20,000
Guoco Holdings (Phils.)	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	200,000
Ionics Inc.	11	11	11	11	60,500
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2	2.02	2	2.02	1,309,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.44	8,882,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.68	3,300,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.19	0.2	0.19	0.2	3,130,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	2,470,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	4	5.3	4	5.3	190,000
Philtread Hdgs. Corp. B	4	4	4	4	20,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	60,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.2	5.7	5.7	30,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.245	0.23	0.245	1,070,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,910,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	20,000
Music Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.66	1.66	95,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.76	0.78	0.76	0.78	80,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.0875	0.0875	600,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.86	0.86	0.85	0.85	110,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.6	0.62	0.57	0.57	8,350,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	450,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	640,000
Manila Jockey Club	18	18	18	18	3,200
Philippine Racing Club	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	30,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	38	38.5	38	38.5	142,500
Cosmos Bottling Corp.-Pref.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	14,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	148,000,000
RFM Corp.-Pref.	5	5	5	5	10,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,700
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.015	0.016	0.014	0.015	16,300,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7	7	7	7	2,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.9	4.95	4.85	4.85	5,903,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	420,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	3,050,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.24	1,000,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	5,430,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.84	1.84	1,751,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	150,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2	2	2	2	164,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	1,600,000
SM Development Corp.	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.2	6	6	3,692,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	11,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	4,000,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.042	0.044	0.04	0.04	23,800,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	1,600,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	100,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0042	0.0044	0.0042	0.0042	28,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	6,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.43	0.43	0.42	0.42	1,050,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.45	0.45	0.42	0.42	1,630,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	12,600,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	1,000,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	1,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	3,142,620	60,329,610.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	277,810,640	251,985,645.00
PRO	23,170,000	57,655,490.00
Mining	78,180,000	2,445,000.00
OIL	14,600,000	259,500.00
GRAND TOTALS:	396,917,260	372,708,845.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	555.65	DOWN 2.96
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,899.97	DOWN 36.28
PRO	493.59	DOWN 15.06
Mining	1,255.88	DOWN 38.32
OIL	1.69	DOWN 0.03
All Shares Index	818.20	UP 7.62
Composite	1,333.71	DOWN 29.18

NO. OF ADVANCES: 21; NO. OF DECLINES: 53; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 41; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 115; NO. OF TRADES: 2,324

DISCLOSURES

RFM Corp. listed 1,159,998 common shares yesterday.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.** approved the appointment of Armando Medina as advisory board member effective immediately.

* * *

ELECTED as officers of **Petron Corp.** were Nicasio Alcantara as chair; Motassim Al-Ma'ashouq as president and CEO; Ziad Al-Labban, Jose Campos Jr., Alfred Trio and Walter Tan as vice presidents; Antonio Pelayo as controller; Rosario Eijansantos as corporate treasurer; Liberador Villegas as corporate secretary and Luis Maglaya as assistant corporate secretary.

* * *

MERALCO announced a 30-centavo per kilowatt-hour reduction in its rates starting this month.

* * *

THE BOARD of **Crown Equities Inc.** approved the resignation of Gloria Tan Climaco as president and CEO. Elected as new president and CEO is Richard Chiongbian.

* * *

SAN Miguel Corp. will hold a briefing on its first semester 2001 financial results on Aug. 2 at 1:30 p.m. at the Executive Dining Room, San Miguel Corp. Head Office Complex, Mandaluyong.

* * *

BELLE Corp. and **Sysmart Corp.** signed a memorandum of agreement confirming the investment of **Sysmart Group** in **Highlands Prime Leisure Properties Inc. (HPLPI)** through the acquisition of 51 percent of Belle's HPLPI shares for about P2.5 billion.

* * *

URBAN Bank Inc. shareholders approved the bank's merger with **Export and Industry Bank** and **Urbancorp Investments Inc.**

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Liberty Flour Mills Inc.** were Jesus Jalandoni, William Carlos Uy, Felix Maramba Jr., Sergio Locsin, Jose Ma. Lopez, Maximo Kalaw Jr., Benjamin Jalandoni, John Carlos Uy, Vincent Vargas, William Ang and David Ng. *Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research*

FORT BONI ROW

PSE demands compensation

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange is demanding compensation from Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. and Capital Consortium Inc. for "lost opportunity" allegedly resulting from these companies' refusal to start building the bourse's new headquarters at the Fort Bonifacio Global City.

In a statement released yesterday, the PSE building committee said the PSE "should be compensated for the use of its name for marketing the Fort Bonifacio Global City and for the lost opportunity to take up bids of other parties who submitted offers to provide similar premises."

The members of the committee, who met on Tuesday, said FBDC and CCI breached a Feb. 22, 1999 relocation agreement they signed with the PSE.

In this agreement, Metro Pacific Corp., local unit of Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd., offered to donate a 12,000-square-meter lot and construct two connected buildings in the Big Delta area of Fort Bonifacio that would unite the PSE's Makati and Ortigas trading floors by 2004.

Metro Pacific also offered to provide 40,000 square meters for the offices of the PSE's brokers.

The stock exchange, in turn, agreed to transfer its trading floors to the Fort Bonifacio site and use it as its headquarters for at least 10 years.

Last month, however, FBDC vice president Carlos Rufino asked the PSE to consider amending the agreement, citing slumping property prices and Metro Pacific's deteriorating finances.

FBDC is part of the Metro Pacific group developing Fort Bonifacio, a former military base, as an alternative commercial site to the Ayala business district in Makati.

Metro Pacific president Ricardo Pascua said Metro Pacific was sticking to its commitments, but it wanted to review its agreement with the PSE in light of the current condition of the local property sector and Metro Pacific's financial health.

Metro Pacific is currently saddled with P10.5 billion in debts. It is trying to dispose of some assets to pursue the development of Fort Bonifacio. The company has announced plans to bid out 18.9 hectares in its northern central business district this September to free up more resources for the development of the rest of Fort Bonifacio.

FBDC counsel Estelito Mendoza earlier said construction of the PSE headquarters could not begin because the concerned parties had yet to finalize the development program and milestones for this project.

PAL not ready for air lib

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE Airlines Inc. said yesterday that it was not yet ready for competition that would arise from an open-skies agreement between Manila and Washington.

"We're not yet ready to compete with giants," PAL vice president Rolando Estabillo told the INQUIRER last week.

He said most airlines abroad had much bigger and better aircraft than what the country's carriers had.

"We're not saying that we don't have good aircraft, but we are under rehabilitation right now, so we won't be able to compete with them in terms of drastic price fare rate cuts," he said.

He added that the Securities and Exchange Commission as well as its creditors were watching PAL's every move because it was under rehabilitation.

"We can't make any moves that will result in losses," he said.

Estabillo said the open-skies agreement was for the government to decide, but PAL would do its share to help in any way it could.

"We're not against liberalization as long as it's progressive. The government should have safety nets for open-skies agreements with any country," he said.

He added that the government should first protect the interest of local carriers before it saw to the welfare of foreign airlines.

"Other countries are protecting their own airlines. The Philippine government should do the same," he said.

Another local carrier, Cebu Pacific Air, said it was still reviewing the impact of an open-skies agreement between the Philippines and the United States.

"I think the issue is the number of available flights we have right now. I think the Philippines has not yet utilized all its available flights," Cebu Pacific president and chief executive Lance Gokongwei told the INQUIRER.

Key aviation officials earlier said the country was not yet ready for an open-skies policy.

"We're trying to earn more dollars. If we open our skies completely to foreign entities, we stand to lose whatever we would earn," Air Transportation Office chief Adelberto Yap said earlier.

"It is not feasible at this point in time. It actually depends on how the economy will recover," Ninoy Aquino International Airport general manager Edgardo Manda said.

Yap and Manda said they preferred a "progressive liberalization" of the local air transport industry instead of an open-skies policy.

An open-skies policy will give other countries unrestricted aviation access. It also dismantles government control over pricing and route designations.

The government said earlier it would oppose a proposal to allow unrestricted aviation access into Philippine and US markets.

US charge d'affaires Michael Malinowski had written a letter to Manila informing that a US team will arrive here to discuss an open-skies policy with local aviation officials.

"The purpose of the visit would be to discuss both bilateral and multilateral options for establishing an open skies relationship between our two countries, and to answer any questions that Philippine authorities may have about open skies," Malinowski had said in his letter to the transportation department.

Aico extension studied

THE ASSOCIATION of Southeast Asian Nations is studying Malaysia's proposal to extend the Asean Industrial Cooperation up to 2010 and grant duty-free status to intraregional trade through the scheme.

The plan is expected to spur more interest in Aico despite the start of the Asean Free Trade Area in 2003, when duties on the bulk of goods traded in the region are scheduled to fall to 5 percent and lower.

A source said the plan was among the main topics of the ongoing meeting of the Asean Working Group on Industry Competitiveness. The plan would be up for approval in the upcoming Asean Ministerial Meeting this year.

The source said the Philippines was still weighing the benefits of the Aico extension and its impact on Afta.

Aico is a pan-Asean industrial partnership agreement where multinational corporations are allowed to build their products in several factories in different countries in the region by sharing product components and shipping them at preferred duties. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

Abaca revival seen

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has expressed interest in reinvigorating abaca fiber as a major export product to take advantage of strong demand for the commodity, which is being used as a raw material to make paper notes.

In an interview, Trade Secretary Manuel "Mar" Roxas II said he met with former Tarlac Rep. Jose "Peping" Cojuangco to discuss Cojuangco's proposal to boost production of abaca in Mindanao, specifically in the ancestral lands of the country's ethnic minorities, or "lumads."

Roxas said Cojuangco had identified vast tracts of land belonging to lumads as possible farm centers to produce abaca fiber.

He said the move would lead to a tighter integration of abaca production in the country, considering a German firm had a processing plant for abaca fiber currently in operation in Iligan.

"This is a good backward integration project that would strengthen the supply chain for what could be a very potent export product," Roxas said.

Roxas said demand for high-quality abaca fiber was on the uptrend considering central banks worldwide were increasingly using the indigenous fiber to produce their currencies because of its durability compared to other products.

Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

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MON. - FRI. (8 AM 7 PM) / SATURDAY (8 AM - 3 PM)

CGU INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE plc
SYNOPSIS OF ANNUAL STATEMENT
*A. Philippine Business
As of December 31, 1999

ADMITTED ASSETS		
Treasury Bills	P	128,110,300.00
Bonds		110,000,000.00
Stocks		36,070,286.69
Other Loans		4,053,711.60
Other Investments		22,050,000.00
Security Fund		66,013.00
Cash in Office and in Banks		79,311,699.89
Premiums Receivable		146,948,246.42
Premiums Due from Ceding Companies		6,526,297.00
Premiums Reserve Withheld by Ceding Companies		329,889.00
Reinsurance Recoverable on Losses		60,981,008.63
Accrued Investment Income		827,030.68
EDP Machines		4,644,660.03
Total Admitted Assets	P	599,919,142.94
LIABILITIES		
Losses and Claims Payable	P	161,230,557.98
Loss Adjustment Expense Payable		306,127.40
Reserve for Unearned Premiums		171,552,552.00
Catastrophe Loss Reserve		7,932,419.50
Premium Due to Reinsurers		125,986,500.00
Premium Reserve Withheld for Reinsurers		18,254,309.00
Commissions Payable		7,500,000.00
Taxes Payable		15,854,354.05
Accrued Expenses		16,293,078.00
Unearned Bond Discount		2,574,215.79
Other Liabilities		7,858,035.66
Total Liabilities	P	535,342,149.38
TRUSTEED SURPLUS		
Statutory Deposit		50,000,000.00
Special Surplus Funds:		
Fluctuation Reserve - Stock & Other Investment		7,414,425.29
Home Office Account		(84,528,726.73)
Home Office Account Inward Remittances		91,691,295.00
Trusted Surplus		64,576,993.56
Total Liabilities and Trusteed Surplus	P	599,919,142.94

B. Worldwide Business
As of December 31, 1999

Total Assets	£72,962,000,000.00
Total Liabilities	63,997,000,000.00
Networth	8,965,000,000.00
Total Liabilities and Networth	£72,962,000,000.00

*(This synopsis, prepared from the 1999 Annual Statement, approved by the Insurance Commissioner, is published pursuant to Section 225 of the Insurance Code.)

ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT

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October 15 - 26, 2001

Service makes all the difference in today's parity environment. Whether marketing a product or a service, the service chain must be kept seamlessly ongoing. This makes for today's sustainable strategic difference.

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Program Contents:

- The Progression of Economic Value
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- Service Process: The Science of Service
- The Characteristics of Service
- Measuring Service Quality
- Service Operation
- Defining Standards and Performance for Services
- Building/Mobilizing Service Delivery System
- The Flower of Service and its Petals
- The Internet and Service Marketing
- Adding Value through Information Technology
- What Customers Really Want: Experience
- Creating the Best Experience for Your Customer.
- Meeting/Modifying Customer Expectations

Prof. Tomas B. Lopez
Program Director

Spearheading the course is Professor Tomas B. Lopez the Don Demetrio Tuason Professor of Agribusiness. He teaches in the Master in Development Management (MDM) program. His areas of specialization include Service Marketing, Customer Relationship Marketing, Social Marketing, Entrepreneurship, Strategic Management, and Information Technology. He took his undergraduate course at Ateneo de Manila University before finishing at AIM with distinction. He sits on the board of several marketing and trade organizations in the US and the Philippines, and is currently involved in hotel restaurant development and other tourist-oriented ventures.

Contact: **Bessie Nery** - Program Administrator
Tel. Nos. 892-4011 to 25 loc. 230, 263 • E-mail: acortes@dataserve.aim.edu.ph
Website: http://www.aim.edu.ph • Fax Feply Form below to 892-3260 /892-3340

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☐ Basic Management Program, *August 13 – 31*
☐ Human Capital Management, *August 20 – 24*
☐ Executive MBA, *starts August 20, 2001 (18 month program)*
☐ Marketing Strategy Course, *September 3 – 14*
☑ Course for Senior Bank Managers, *September 3 – 21*

AIM EXECUTIVE EDUCATION and LIFELONG LEARNING CENTER

MOTORING
CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

Auto websites spruce up RP motoring industry

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

(First of two parts)

THE MOTORING media is getting hot, hot, hot in cyberspace. A new venue is breeding new writers flaunting refreshing and stimulating webpages with a global perspective. The end result: more options for motoring readers, more tips for automotive consumers.

Joining the fray are the local automotive websites. Although the Philippines still has comparatively few Internet users—one million Filipino netizens—the budding generation of surfers that auto websites cater to can't be ignored. Some of the most promising local websites are Kotse.com, Autoindustriya.com, Drive.com.ph and cars.com.ph.

Get to meet them.

Circuit racing, karting, rallying, autoshows, drag racing, new car launches, message boards and more are found in Autoindustriya.com, a techie-looking website. Though looking intimidating at first because of a car's skeletal structure that greets surfers before offering the main site, it has one of its most popular and innovative portions called Industri Finder. Users can search for a particular part or service that they want and a list of shops that carry that product or offer that service will be displayed. Users can simply type in a keyword or use a pull-down menu for general categories. Autoindusriya's Benj Ngo said that this is all done in real-time. There's also the Talk board or the message forum and the for sale section (free classified ads). Autoindustriya.com aims to become an all-encompassing automotive portal.

Hitting around 600 hits a day, it changes content once a week but can sometimes post new info two or three times a week. It celebrates its first year on Sept. 19.

Another website that looks like it's having a lot of fun is Drive.com.ph. The most visited contents here are test-drive reports. Its Drive-o-meter that accompanies each test-drive report acts as a subjective rating of a vehicle's safety, *pogi* points, and performance. Its forum page gets letters from surfers about "unscrupulous or incompetent" automotive establishments, described editor in chief's Eric Soriano. Soriano said the 1-year-old Drive.com.ph's distinction lies in its strong advocacy for automotive consumers' rights and environment-friendly motoring. Soriano admitted that in terms of site traffic, Drive.com.ph has a lot of catching up to do. Drive.com.ph averages about 400 page views per day.

The grooviest-looking site would probably be Kotse.com, greeting surfers with a grinning mascot in a convertible. It is recognized as the first Philippine auto site and averages 2 million hits a month. Kotse.com's president and CEO Jay Diego, however, was quick to add that hits are not a good measure of the number of individual visitors to a site but merely show how busy a site's server is as determined by the number of graphics on a webpage. Diego said that the more graphics on a page, the more hits.

"In Kotse.com, we can boast of 11,000 regular visitors who visit the site an average of five times per person," said Diego. Each visit, he said, lasts 23 minutes and each person would normally go through about 17 pages.

Kotse.com's content changes almost every minute, particularly its message board. Another notable section on the site (which is this writer's favorite, as well) is the Mang Bitoy section, an online mechanic who troubleshoots netizens' automotive problems.

(To be continued)

Storming a media rally sprint

BY RAYMOND TRIBDINO

(First of two parts)

ENVY.

That is what I feel whenever I get those darn City Rally Sprint press releases in the mailbox.

"They have all the fun!" I say to my wife who looks back at me puzzled.

She had just read an article in Autosport magazine about rallying and the pains and heartaches that come with it. "You call this fun," pointing to a picture of a Peugot 206 with its wheels pointing skyward.

Then I enumerate my journalist-friends, whose driving skills I sincerely admire, and who once shared the track with me at the first Honda City Media Challenge in 1998. "Anjo is there, and so are Manny and Aris...and Marvin...and Tammy... Erle... Brian... my former editor at BusinessWorld, Arnold Belleza...why even Honda's Arnel Doria and Tintin Reyes are doing their bit for racing humanity."

She looks at me quizzically then advises me to just write this article.

Challenge veterans

The City Rally Sprint is the more challenging offspring of the City Media Challenge. The idea is simple. Get a bunch of speed-happy (but courageous and skilled, even foolish) motoring journalists.

Stuff them into a Honda City Type Z VTEC. Let go on a rally course for pros. See much action.

Being graduates of an equally dusty (at times, muddy) event, these rally veterans are honed to the nuances of balance, correct footwork and skillful steering.

Everyone expected the aggressive but controlled Anjo Perez of Manila Bulletin to dominate the event, just as he has done in the first three years of the Media Challenge. I had my money on Anjo and Gadgets Magazine's Manny de los Reyes.

Anjo and Tintin went on to win Round One. But the race really went to Manny, who just a few meters from stage finish, rolled the City and walked out of it alive. Along with the dauntless Ronnie Romero of BusinessWorld, Manny now has a story he can tell his grandchildren, only the likes of Colin McRae, Tommi Makinen and Juha Kankunnen can also speak of.

Now I'm really jealous!

Manny and Ronnie are teammates to Butch Gamboa of Motoring Today and Milo Cacanindin of ABS-CBN.

(To be continued)

What sets the Forester apart

THE FIRST time the Forester rolled off Subaru's assembly line in 1997, it got people guessing: Is it a station wagon or a sport utility vehicle? Even the updated Forester is the quintessential crossover vehicle, for it looks, rides and handles like an estate wagon yet has the high (7.5 inches) road clearance, all-wheel-drive (AWD) and generous cargo space of a light-duty SUV. When Car and Driver magazine conducted a comparison test of the small SUVs—Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V, Jeep Cherokee SE, Kia Sportage and Forester—in 1999, the 2.5-liter, 165-hp Forester finished first and was lauded for its engine power, off-road capability, refined on-road manners, smooth ride, quiet and comfortable interior. In another Car and Driver comparo this year, this time against new rivals plus former competitors, the facelifted Forester only placed fourth behind the powerful new Ford Escape and the all-new 2001 RAV4, but it remains the only compact SUV to be recommended by Consumer Reports in its 2001 Sport Utility Special Issue and to receive a "Good" rating in an insurance industry offset crash test.

Launched in Manila last April, the CBU (completely built-up) 2.0-liter Forester literally made a big splash when it beat another AWD car in a wet surface test at an outdoor parking lot in Fort Bonifacio. The Forester also displayed superior traction in a log hurdle test and tug-o'-war contest, forming the basis for "the first Sports Safety Vehicle" slogan in print and broadcast advertisements that you see and hear these days.

What sets the Forester apart from the other cute utes (although its appearance is unique rather than cute) are its AWD technology and longitudinally mounted, horizontally opposed engine, a configuration that helped the Impreza (on whose chassis the Forester is based) win three World Rally Championships (1995-97). AWD distributes the engine power evenly to all four wheels. Unlike four-wheel-drive (4WD), AWD does not have low-range gearing, but it still provides better traction than 2WD when driving on wet, slippery roads and when moving out of mud, dirt and sand. By shifting power between the front and rear wheels, AWD can also provide traction during acceleration and added engine braking force during deceleration. While an AWD is more capable of climbing steep roads under slippery conditions than a 2WD, during very sharp turns or sudden braking there is little difference in handling. All AWD systems are full-time.

The symmetrical AWD and flat, horizontally opposed layout keeps the Forester's center of gravity low, which is a plus factor in handling and braking. In an interview for a magazine article, Masaru Katsurada, Subaru's product planning and management division chief, outlined the design's advantages. Aside from a low center of gravity, the flat engine allows fairly large 4-cylinder applications with few vibration problems. The longitudinal engine orientation also facilitates packaging compact 4WD transmissions, provides better fore-and-aft weight distribution by keeping the transfer case and the transmission itself between the axles. Moreover, the equal-length driveshafts minimize torque steer. The latter contrasts with transverse powertrains that need an outrigger bearing to simulate equal-length driveshafts.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

The Forester's 2.0-liter SOHC, 16-valve flat-4 delivers 125 hp /5,600 rpm max and max torque of 184 Nm/3,600 rpm. Not as powerful as the new RAV4 or the current CR-V, but no laggard either, even with an automatic transmission, as I discovered at 160 kph on the Skyway when I shifted to the Power Mode. The Forester is roomy, with exceptional head space, many useful compartments (center and overhead consoles, dashboard storage, front door pockets, coin tray, four under-cargo storage trays) and 60:40 fold-down rear seat for extra cargo space. Independent coil springs combined with McPherson struts up front and dual link struts in the rear suspension provide a comfy ride for the long haul. Ultra-safe, the Forester has ring-shaped reinforcement frames, dual airbags, ABS, side impact and steering support beams, keyless entry. I liked the Momo leather steering wheel, the green ignition switch light that comes on when any of the doors is opened, the retractable luggage cover, four cargo anchorage eyelets, two shopping bag hooks and Alpine in-dash CD changer. I didn't like the dual cupholders that are pulled out of the dash above the stereo because they jangle when the car is in motion, the lack of fog lamps as standard equipment and the small (205/70 R 15) tires. Summing up, however, there's much more to like than dislike in the Forester. With automatic transmission, the Forester costs P1.238 million; with manual gearshift, P1.188 million.

* * *

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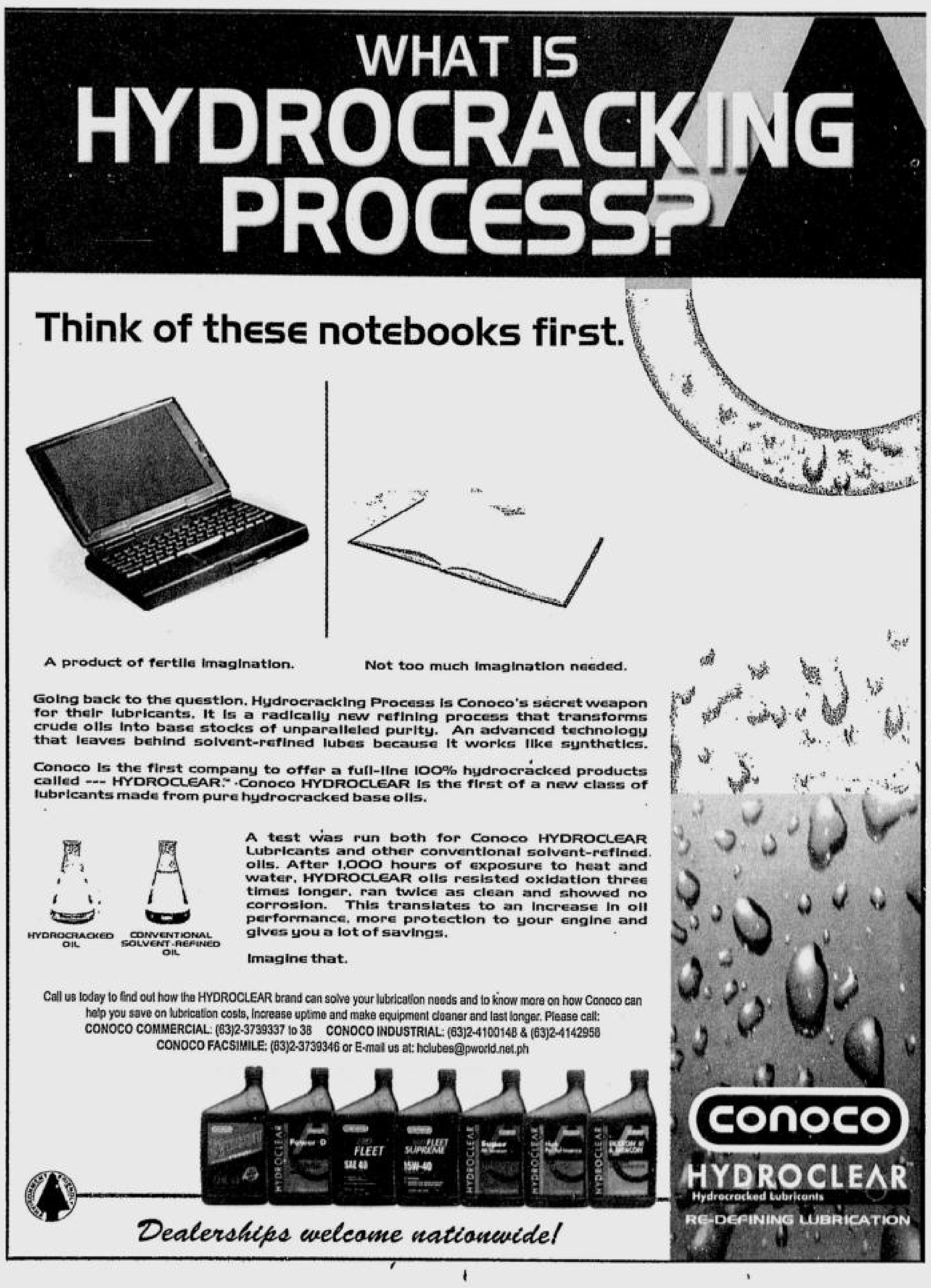
* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@pacific.net.ph



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NISSAN FRONTIER 4x2

Luxurious necessities

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR
AND RAYMOND TRIBDINO

FOR DECADES, Nissan-Universal Motors steadfastly rolled out pickup after pickup from its assembly lines. And for decades, these pickups remained as basic and utilitarian as possible. No fancies, no frills. Just basic versatility, extreme reliability and a perpetually clucking diesel engine.

You will never hear a peep about how Nissan's pickups perform. They may not be the fastest or the most beautiful, but they do their work well. That was until Nissan-UMC decided to do a major revamp of the pickup line and introduced the Frontier.

The new curves and brawny body cladding were softened by the very first diesel-and-automatic transmission combination for a locally assembled pickup.

We test Nissan-UMC's latest improvement on its excellent engine and drivetrain formula. Called the Pleasure Series, this 2001 Frontier features a perked-up interior, a bed liner as standard and some enhancements in the transmission department.

Diesel burned here

Raymond: Nissan's overachiever 3.2-liter diesel engine does not benefit from direct-injection nor turbocharger technologies, but is capable of producing 103 hp at 3,600 rpm. Torque kicks in at about 1,200 rpm and ends at 216 Nm with 2,000 rpm on the tachometer.

The shift box is easy to use and quite accurate. A little switch in the dashboard gives a choice of "Hold" and "Power." "Hold" patiently keeps the transmission in the lower gears longer such as when doing hauling or towing chores. "Power" moves the gearbox up the cogs faster, delivering more feet-per-second after initial acceleration. Keeping it in the middle sort of balances out the use of engine output.

Without the aid of a turbocharger, it still managed to get up to speed quite quickly, under 20 seconds to 100 kph, on Power mode from a brake-torque launch. Passing punch is respectable and top speed dials in at about 145 kilometers per hour.

But can we get rid of that nasty engine shake when we turn off the ignition?

Tessa: I don't know, don't ask me. Seriously, though I couldn't help but laugh at the funny engine shake when turning it off. Brgh-brgh-brghhh . I thought I ran out of fuel. But thankfully, our observations revealed that the Frontier 4x2 is "not thirsty." According to our measurements, if driven prudently it can cruise nearly 12 km per liter (give or take a milliliter) on the highway. I measured 8 km per liter, city driving, but you might want to reevaluate that. I kept the transmission set on Power, just in case the opportunity to squeeze out of the traffic funnel came.

I agree. Managing engine power is not difficult with the Frontier. Feathering the throttle keeps the engine at top gear and flooring it occasionally will cause it to search for a more suitable ratio. It was just a little noisy during acceleration, or was it the way I drove it when I was in a hurry? What do you think?

Raymond: There is a noticeable vibration when the engine zings to shift gears when passing. But that is a minor nuisance compared to the comparatively smoother power delivery. Additional padding on the floor and around the doors and bulkhead keeps the noise down.

No trees killed

Raymond: Definitely no trees were killed to produce the faux woodgrain finished center console. But the sumptuous leather seats and door trim are a very much welcome revision. The seats are firm but comfortable. I do have a gripe about the cupholder mounted over the radio. Cold sweat from cups of iced tea running down into the radio face is not a pretty sight. A shift lock is now standard for both the 4x2 and 4x4 versions.

One major gripe is the persistent windshield fogging. This is caused by the aircon vents blowing cold air into the windscreen. It can be particularly annoying as your right hand constantly reaches for the wiper-washer switch to clear the disturbance.

Tessa: Oops, wait. Let me catch up. Have to agree with you on the cupholder thing. I thought my cup o' Coke would come flying out when I ejected my Kenny G. tape from the stereo. And the windshield fogging? Fogs together with my contact lenses. I guess that would mean double time for the windshield wipers. But I liked the vertical direction of the Frontier's gear gauge strategically placed in the middle of the dashboard (The gear gauge in other A/T pickups is awkwardly placed horizontally). The Frontier's easy to shift from park to drive during stop and go without removing my eyes on the road.

Rides like a pickup

Raymond: One of the Frontier's most endearing qualities is the rigidity of its body structure. Traditionally, raised leaf-spring suspensions combined with fat tires produce a harsh ride. The Frontier's ride however is firm but not jarring. Passing through the South Expressway's rutted center lane from Susana Heights to Biñan proves this theory.

Unloaded, there will be observable oversteer when pushed and the rear end does feel loose, especially when gliding through the ruts and bumps at speed. But don't let that stop you. The huge drum-and-disc brakes however will. About 142 feet from 100 kph, short enough for a vehicle with a long wheelbase.

Tessa: Well, I felt my ride was bouncy but I figured if the pickup was loaded with passengers and stuff, the ride would be smoother. Not that it's disturbing, I have driven several pickups before and am driving one now almost every day and the "bounciness" quality is always there (unlike my hair, which admittedly needs a little of that).

Enhanced safety

Raymond: A well-proportioned hunk, reads one of the evaluation sheets for the Frontier. An appropriate description, I suppose. Even without the heavy body cladding of the 4x4, the 4x2 still looks confident. Moderately aggressive, to be accurate, compared to the 4x4 version.

Nissan's Zone Body Concept brings together energy dissipation of a crumple zone and the enhanced protection of a passenger safety-cell. Driver-side airbag is standard, as is the shift lock, which prevents the driver from removing the ignition key when the gearbox is not set to park. A very effective keyless entry and

LUXURIOUS/p.B5

BMW introduces 735iL model series in RP

BY AIDA SEVILLA MENDOZA

BMW Group Philippines formally launched its 7 Series with the presentation of the 735iL to the motoring media in Makati last week. Poised for direct competition with the Mercedes S-Class, Jaguar XJ8 and Audi S8, the introduction of the 7 Series serves notice to the top-end car market in the Philippines that BMW produces large, magnificent, high-performance luxury saloons as well as medium-size cars like the popular BMW 3 and 5 Series and sports cars like the M5 and Z8, BMW Group Philippines Corp. president Mark Gilbert said.

Contrary to common belief, the BMW 735iL with its exceptionally high standard of engineering and innovative technology is as much a car for people who enjoy driving as it is a limo for the chauffeured or driven. Easy to handle, nimble and agile despite its longer wheelbase, the 735iL is powered by an 8-cylinder, 3.5-liter engine mated to a 5-speed automatic transmission with Steptronic. Generating 238 bhp and capable of 243 kilometers per hour, the 735iL accelerates from zero to 100 kph in 8.2 seconds and has an estimated composite (city and country driving) fuel consumption of 12.1 liters per 100 km.

Inside as well as outside, the 735iL exudes supreme quality and dynamic elegance. The luxurious interior, with electronically adjustable leather seats and headrests, burr walnut wood trim, folding tables and movable carpeted footrests for rear passengers, is exceptionally spacious and comfortable. An on-board computer monitor with TV in the center console (which automatically turns off when the car's speed reaches 4 kph, then turns on when the car stops), HiFi system with Professional DSP and 6-disc CD changer, telephone, electronically operated sunblind for the rear windshield, separate aircon for the rear compartment and Park Distance Control are among the standard equipment that elevate the 735iL to a class all its own. The ride quality is superb, a refined synthesis of comfort and agility. Maximum safety reserves are provided by 10 airbags (front, side and head airbags for driver, front passenger and rear passengers), ABS, Automatic Stability Control + Traction (ASC + T).

The retail price of the 735iL, including VAT but excluding LTO registration and motor vehicle insurance, is P7,450,000. BMW has also made available the 750iL Protection, which has security features like bulletproof steel and glass and run-flat tires.

Motorcyclists have as much right as other motorists

FULL TANK

Al S. Mendoza

I AM gladdened by its approval. I refer to that court decision allowing motorcycles to use our expressways. It took sometime before the petitioners could finally win their legal battle.

As we love to say, *"Huli man daw at magaling, naihahabol din."*

Said in English, "Late is never late."

* * *

In many countries, motorcycles are not barred from using expressways. In America alone, you see them all over.

But there's one big difference, though.

While motorcycle riders in many countries observe traffic rules almost to the letter, that cannot be said so in the Philippines. For example, I still see many motorcyclists cruising the city without helmets, or headgear. That's a big no-no in America and Europe.

I hope that the next time I go home to Pangasinan, and I will see a motorcyclist running ahead of me at the Northern Luzon Expressway, that motorcyclist is wearing a helmet.

* * *

I hope authorities will issue the proper guidelines for both motorcyclists and other motorists using both the North and South Luzon Expressways.

In America and many other countries, the motorcycle is equivalent to the space a car occupies at the expressway. Thus, a car driver is prohibited from pushing his vehicle side-by-side with a motorcycle, thereby making both vehicles occupy the same lane.

The motorcycle must be treated like a full-car at all times—in the city or at the expressway.

If one is to overtake a motorcycle, a car driver must do it as though he is overtaking a car. Space is a safety net not only for the motorcycle but also for the "bigger" vehicle as well.

* * *

Why can't major thoroughfares in Metro Manila be not like the ones at Rockwell in Makati City? Rockwell's roads are the country's finest, cleanest ever. If they can do it there, why not also with the rest of the city's roads?

Look at Edsa. The city's premier highway has become a horrible stretch of road for years now. Not only because of the traffic jams we see there almost daily, but also because of the road's uneven surface caused mainly by bad asphalting/paving on holes brought about chiefly by rains.

When a patch-up job is done on Edsa, it usually doesn't look nice; it looks more like a mound, if not a minor hump, and to hurdle it gives you a bump. Irritating. Unfriendly to both man and machine.

At midnight down to the wee hours of the morning, when you can travel faster than normal because of the absence of a jam, you encounter a lot of bumps along the way. You need to have a photographic memory in order to avoid those mini humps or cracks to ensure a smooth ride home.

* * *

If I said it already, I'd like to repeat it: Congratulations to our officials for having finally fixed those jam-causing holes on East Avenue and at the Quezon Memorial Circle in Quezon City. I'm sure many motorists are silently applauding, for the repairs done there have certainly freed many of them from time-consuming traps in said areas.

But how about those men in red at the Quezon Memorial Circle, corner Quezon Avenue, who continue to victimize motorists with invented road violations?

They were gone for a few days. Seemingly, their "vacation" is over. They are back to their "old" posts.

Their priority of operation, for sure, is misplaced. Jams don't occur there; they frequently occur at East, Quezon, West and North Avenues. Especially near Edsa.

My, my. And to think that those men in red have their motorcycles just parked nearby. What a waste. What grisly sight.

* * *

First, he "texted" me from Singapore where he is now based, inquiring if I had fully recovered from an illness.

Second, he telephoned me from Jakarta, where he made a brief visit as part of his job as Toyota's new man for the region.

"Howdy?" he said. "Heard it's raining cats and dogs there."

How thoughtful. Only a Vince Socco can do such things.

Thank you, Vince. And enjoy your new-found life in the Lion City also known as the city below the wind.

* * *

QUOTE ME: When it's only a drizzle, switch off your wiper while on a full stop before a traffic light. Saves your gadget from wear and tear.

Luxurious . . .

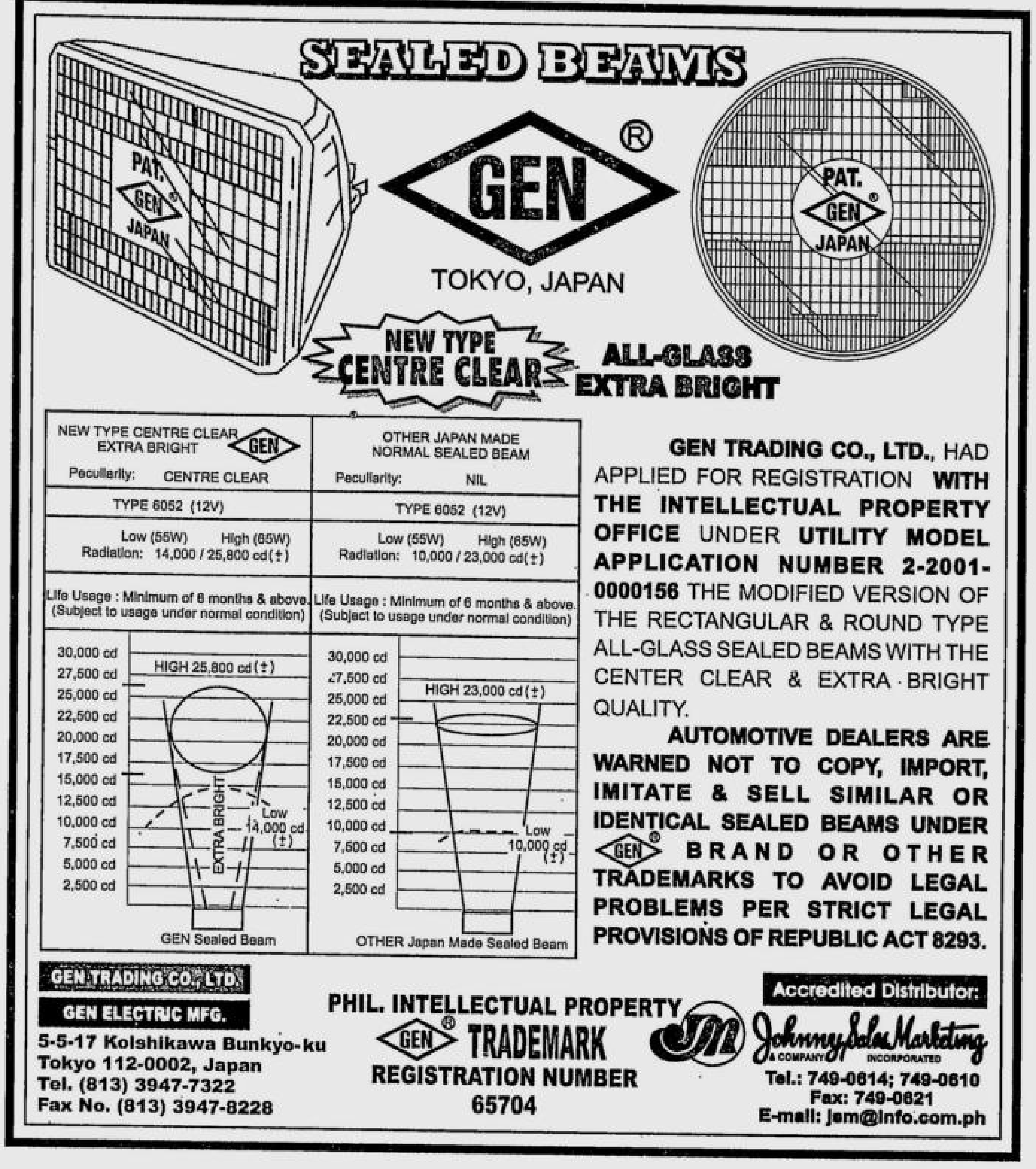
(From page B4)

alarm system are also included in the P819,000 price tag.

Says the press release "Pleasure begins with peace of mind." I most definitely agree.

Tessa: Amen to that.

The Frontier 4x2 gets **a 7 out of a total 10 points.** Top scores for overall proficiency. Very high grades for engine performance. Definitely the best nonturbocharged, automatic gearbox, diesel engine pickup (is there any other?). The mix-up in the interior pieces pulls the score down in this department. It must be made clear however, that this does not mean the "pleasure" part is gone. The supple leather seats, superior ergonomics and general feel of the cabin provide very nice, strong impressions. Just get rid of that kitchen counter top-like center console.



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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ALFREDO C. AQUINO has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. # 413; Book # 343; Page # 84; Series of 1999 before notary public AMPARO G. OCAMPO of Manila (PDI-Aug. 2, 9 & 16, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **ARSENIO F. MATIAS** has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs with Doc. #46, Page #11, Bk #114 under the Notary Public of Gregorio D. Davis Jr. of Makati City.
(PDI-July 26, Aug. 2 & 9, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **CHAN CHUN KIT** has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs on July 13, 2001 under Doc#388, Page#79, Book#14, Series of 2001 before Notary Public Atty. Antonio U. Gonzales of Makati City.
(PDI-July 19, 26, & Aug. 2, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Meralco A Stock Certificate No. 574576 under the name of FELICIANO P. GAMMAD was lost.
(PDI-July19, 26 & Aug.2,2001)

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

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The Philippine Ports Authority hereby invites Filipino Consultants to prequalify and to participate in the selection process for the provision of consultancy services for the conduct of Soil Investigation for Selected Ports-Package 1 in accordance with the NEDA Guidelines on the Hiring of Consultants for Government infranstructure Projects (Implementing Rules and Regulations), as amended.

Consultants with extensive experience in geotechnical investigation, surveying, drilling, sampling, field and laboratory testing of soils, rocks and minerals for port development projects and other related activities are requested to submit their letters of intent and prequalification statements to the Office of the Assistant General Manager for Engineering, 2nd Floor, Marsman Building, Muelle de San Francisco, Gate 1, South Harbor, Port Area, Manila not later than 1700 hours on 31 August 2001.

Interested firms will be prequalified by the PPA's Prequalification, Evaluation and Awards Committee (PEAC) for consultancy services for infrastructure projects based on their submitted Prequalification Documents in accordance with the specific guidelines set forth and prequalification forms specified in Appendix A of the NEDA Guidelines.

Only prequalified firms will be notified and requested to submit sealed bids and other documents. The evaluation of pre-qualified firms shall be in accordance with Appendix B of the NEDA Guidelines.

PPA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein and to accept such bid as it may consider complying and the most advantageous to the Government.

PPA assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate, or indemnify the bidders for any expense or loss they may incur in the preparation of their prequalification statements/bid nor does it guarantee that an award will be made on the basis of these documents.

Additional information may be furnished upon request. Please address all communications to the Assistant General Manager for Engineering, 2nd Floor, Marsman Building, Muelle de San Francisco, Gate 1, South Harbor, Port Area, Manila. Any delay in the submission of such information or its non-provision shall not be construed to mean an extension of the deadline for the submission of said requirements.

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(PDI--July 30 & August 2, 2001)

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JESUS T. PARAS

who was called peacefully by his Creator
on June 23, 2001 in Toronto, Canada and was
laid to rest at Resthaven Memorial Garden Cemetery,
Scarborough, Ontario.

Holy Masses will be offered today, August 2, 2001, in the following churches:

St. James the Great Parish .... 6:00 PM
Ayala Alabang Village, Alabang

St. Jerome Emiliani and .... 6:00 PM
St. Susana Parish
Ayala Alabang Village, Alabang

St. John Bosco Parish .... 12:00 NN
Pasay Road, Makati City

Our Lady of Peace .... 6:00 PM
EDSA Shrine, Mandaluyong City

Christ the King Church .... 6:00 PM
Greenmeadows, Quezon City

He is survived by his wife **Elizabeth**; children and grandchildren **Vivien, Mark, Carla, Larry, Jimpee, Crizel, Mia, Jonjie, Maisa, Dante, Monina, Jimbo, Christian, Zach, Denis, Helen, Irish, Jason Justine** and **Ayesa**.

We request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

75th Birth Anniversary

Dr. Gregorio A. Moral, Jr.

August 3, 1926 – December 29, 2000

Holy Mass will be celebrated in the following churches tomorrow, August 3, 2001:

San Raphael Archangel Parish, *Calaca Batangas* **5:30 a.m.**
Shrine of the Immaculate Concepcion, *Naic Cavite* **6:30 a.m.**
St. Anthony Shrine, *Bustillos, Sampaloc, Manila* **6:30 a.m.**
St. Jude Archdiocesan Shrine, *San Miguel, Manila* **6:30 a.m.**
National Shrine of St. Michael and the Archangels **7:00 a.m.**
J.P. Laurel, San Miguel, Manila
Our Lady of Loreto, Bustillos, *Sampaloc, Manila* **7:00 a.m.**
8:00 a.m.
UST Private Division Chapel, *Sampaloc, Manila* **12:15 p.m.**
Santuario de San Jose, *Greenhills, Mandaluyong* **6:15 p.m.**

Dr. Moral's family enjoins their friends and the pious readers to continue praying for the souls of all the faithfully departed. Heartfelt thanks are extended to those who have supported the ***Special Aid Grant for Indigent Patients (SAGIP),*** *a foundation established by Dr. Moral. In his memory, your continued support will be appreciated.*

We miss you Tatay but we know that you are happy.

Love, Nanay, Eric, Mayette and Allen, Francesca, Miguel, Paolo and Joseph

---

MINDA P. NAVARRETE-LEWIS

of Jolo, Sulu; Quezon City and New South Wales, Australia

peacefully joined our Lord at the age of 74.

Her bereaved sisters **Pureza, Amelia, Aurora,** Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, **Rosalinda** (†), **Isabel** (†); and brother **Emilio** (†); brothers-in-law, Auditor **Pedro Pacio** and **Gen. Romeo M. Reciña**; sister-in-law Auditor **Percida**; nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her cremated remains have been flown in from Australia on July 31, 2001 and will lie in state at their residence at #2 Road 17 Toro Hills, Project 8-B, Quezon City. Together with the cremated remains of her husband, **Frederick John Lewis**, they will be laid to rest at the Mausoleum of the Divine Mercy, San Bartolome de Novaliches Parish on Saturday, August 4, 2001 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

HIS EMINENCE, **JAIME L. CARDINAL SIN**
Archbishop of Manila

Auxiliary bishops and clergy, bereaved mother **Dolores**; brothers and sisters **Antonio & Bella, Alex & Loreto, Margarita & Chito,** and **Francis**; nephews, nieces; relatives and friends,

deeply mourn the demise of

Rev. Fr. Raul R. Villamiel

(Parish Priest of Our Lady of Fatima Parish,
Bacood, Sta. Mesa, Manila)

who died on July 31, 2001 at the age of 45.

His remains lie in state at the Our Lady of the Pillar Parish, Mercury Road, Pilar Village, Las Piñas City.

His Eminence will say Mass on Friday, August 3, 2001 at 9:00 a.m. together with the Auxiliary Bishops and clergy.

Interment follows at the Saint Peter Cemetery, Cavite City after the Funeral Mass on Saturday, August 4, 2001 at 9:00 a.m. at the Our Lady of the Pillar Parish, Las Piñas City.

The faithful are requested to pray for the repose of his soul.

DR. ENRIQUE R. CARLOS

April 24, 1921 - July 28, 2001; 80 years old

His bereaved wife, children, grandchildren, sisters, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Royal Chapel of Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on the 5th of August, Sunday, at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City, after the 8:00 AM Mass.

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COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City
Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City
Tels. (082) 227-1201, 227-1258
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Pasay Road, Makati City Tel. 894-5932 to 34
DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St.,
Manuguit, Manila
Tels. 712-5102; 741-5125; 741-5133
Fax No. 711-3064
F. SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City
Tels. 646-1725, 646-1730

FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME
219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila
Tels. 2812963; 2813034; 2810522
FUNERARIA PANGILINAN
Santo Entierro cor. P. Burgos St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City
(045) 322-5247 ; (045) 888-2959
FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOGUE
No. 67 Pasig Boulevard Extension, Pasig City
Tels. 671-7909, 641-1735
GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK
Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila
Tels. 642-8181 to 82
HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 825-1296 825-1291
LA FUNERARIA LAWRENCE BAQUIRAN
#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur
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Manila #23 Pato St., Project 2, Quezon City
Tel. 434-3258
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
1601 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila
Tels. 711-6931 to 35; 732-4795
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City
Tels. 749-3806 to 11
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City
Tel. (074) 443-3337

LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City
Tel. 895-1011 to 19
MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City
Tels. (075) 515-5960; 515-6529; (0919) 348-7131
MARIAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal
Tels. 645-1855; 682-0209; 682-0210
NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City
Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
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Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel, 27th-Lacson St.,
Mandalagan, Bacolod City Tel. 433-7132
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SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City
Telefax 724-4139, 725-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City Tels. 852-8228, 852-7284
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Tels. 749-3679, 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City Tels. 372-5084, 410-9286 / 87
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Official NBI Morgue, 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City
Tels. 831-3797; 844-7846, 843-1801
MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City
Tels. (075) 515-5960; 515-6529; (0919) 348-7131

We thank the Lord for giving us our beloved...

Margarita Ocampo Guinto

who joined Him on July 28, 2001 at 104 years old

We, her children **Virginia** (widow), **Leonida** and **Pacifico, Belen** and **Bonifacio, Lydia** and **Mario, Reynaldo** and **Remedios**; and all her grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for her eternal repose.

Her body now lies at her residence, 127 Aniban, Bacoor, Cavite. She will be laid to rest at Silangan Memorial Garden on Saturday, August 4, 2001 at 2:30 PM.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."

[illegible]

Angelina Marquez Divad

of Solano, Nueva Viscaya
March 28, 1948 - July 28, 2001

Her remains lie in state at the family residence.

Interment will be at the Solano Municipal Cemetery on August 4, 2001 after the 7:30 a.m. Mass.

PNOC PETROCHEMICAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

(A WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY)

11/F. BA Lepanto Building 8747 Paseo de Roxas 1227 Makati City, Philippines	Tel No. (02) 841-0644 Telefax No. (02) 810-8418	Brgy Batangas Dos Mariveles, Bataan	Te No. (047) 244-7441 Telefax No. (047) 244-5883

INVITATION FOR QUALIFICATION / ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation (PPDC) invites interested contractors currently accredited with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) in good standing to apply for qualification / eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the following project described below:

I.	Work Order No.	WSC-00-013R1
II.	Project Title	Construction of Tank 300 Facilities & Additional Fire Water Distribution System
III.	Scope of Work	Construction of Tank 300, Additional Fire Water System, Concrete Reservoir and Accessories, Storm Drainage System, Perimeter Fencing including Pedestrian and Vehicular Gates and Parking Area.
IV.	Project Location	Petrochemical Industrial Estate (PIE) in Limay and Mariveles, Bataan, Philippines
V.	Approved Budget	Pesos Ten Million Four Hundred One Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Two and 61/100 (P 10,401,822.61)
VI.	Source of Funding	PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation
VII.	Estimated Contract Duration	One Hundred Five (105) Calendar Days
VIII.	PCAB License Minimum Requirement	
	Classification	Medium A
	Category	Water Supply and/or Mechanical Work
IX.	Similar Contracts	Construction of Dams, Reservoir, Irrigation, Flood Control, Tunneling and other Water Supply Facilities
X	Credit Line / Cash Deposit	Pesos One Million Forty Thousand One Hundred Eighty Two & 26/100
	Certificate Requirement	(P1,040,182.26)
XI	Eligibility Statement Forms	One (1) set each to be filled up and submitted for every project.
	Cost of Forms	One Hundred Pesos,each set (P100.00/set)
	Date and Time of Issuance	August 6-17, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance and Submission of Accomplished Eligibility Statements / Documents	PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B.A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts Administration Department or PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
	Deadline of Submission	On or before August 23, 2001 at 3:00 p.m.
XII.	Notice of Eligibility/Ineligibility	
	Date and Time of Issuance	August 13 - September 10, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance	PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B.A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department
XIII.	Pre-bid Conference	
	Date and Time	October 2, 2001 at 9:30 a.m.
	Venue	PPDC Conference Room PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
XIV.	Bid/Tender Documents	Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents.
	Cost of Documents	One Thousand Pesos each set (P1,000.00/set)
	Date and Time of Issuance	September 10-24, 2001 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
	Place of Issuance	PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B.A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department or PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
	Deadline of Submission	On or before October 23, 2001 at 9:30 a.m.
	Place of Submission	PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B.A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department

XV. BID OPENING IN THE SAME VENUE WILL FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION OF BIDS. LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Prospective bidders are required to submit original copy of Credit Line / Cash Deposit Certificate/s and original copies of pertinent documents such as Contractor's PCAB License, audited Financial Statements, etc. for verification/ authentication purposes.

All particulars relative to pre-qualification / eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of PD 1594 and its Implementing Rules and Relations, as amended, and other applicable rules and regulations.

PPDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PPDC. PPDC further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss that may incur in the preparation of their bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **VICTORIO MARIO A. DIMAGIBA**
BAC-Chairman

(PDI – Aug. 2, 8 & 13, 2001)

Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Calipahan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija

INVITATION TO BID NO. NE II-DOE-EF-2001-001

The Department of Energy pursuant to Department Circular No. 95-11-009 under Energy Regulations No. 1-94 implementing Section 5 (i) of Republic Act No. 7638, as amended and its attendant rules and procedures, has allocated from its Electrification Fund (EF) an amount to be made available to Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NEECO II) for the electrification projects in the province of Nueva Ecija as per Notice to Proceed No. EF 2001-486 dated February 13, 2001.

Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NEECO II) invites sealed Bids from eligible bidders for the construction of the following distribution lines:

PROJECT PROPOSAL	KM OF LINE			
	2-Phase	1-Phase	Underbuilt	Open Secondary
1. Brgy. Capintalan, Carranglan		2.210	2.210	0.390
2. Brgy. Putlan, Carranglan	6.910		6.910	0.700
3. Brgy. Piut, Carranglan	6.450		5.550	0.420
4. Brgy. Mayamot I, Talugtug		3.950	0.280	1.050
5. Brgy. Mayamot II, Talugtug		4.020	1.030	0.280
6. Brgy. Sta. Catalina, Talugtug		3.530	0.650	0.420
7. Brgy. Maasin, Talugtug		1.200	0.560	1.260
8. Brgy. Villa Rosario, Talugtug		3.020	1.540	0.560
9. Brgy. Alula, Talugtug	3.360	0.210	1.540	1.190
10. Brgy. Buted, Talugtug		3.390	2.240	0.700
11. Brgy. Saguing, Talugtug				0.280
12. Brgy. Sampaloc, Talugtug		1.710	0.700	0.490
13. Brgy. Macapabellag, Guimba		1.330	0.320	0.350
14. Brgy. Sta. Lucia, Guimba		4.980	3.940	0.700
TOTAL	16.720	29.550	27.470	8.790

Bidders are required to bid for the whole package only.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased, starting August 6, 2001, by eligible bidders upon submission of a written application to the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **THREE THOUSAND PESOS (P3,000.00).**

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the office of the PBAC, NEECO II, Calipahan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija, Tel. No. (044) 411-1007. Pre-bid Conference will be held on August 24, 2001 at 9:00 AM at NEECO II Board Room also of the same address.

Sealed proposals in two (2) copies will be received by the PBAC at Village Inn, Mabini Homesite, Cabanatuan City, at exactly 10:00 AM, August 31, 2001 at which time and place said proposal will be opened and read in the presence of Bidders or Bidder's representative who choose to attend.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by a Bid Security equivalent to **TWO AND A HALF PERCENT (2.5%)** of the Bid Price.

NEECO II hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects therein, and accept the bid that is most advantageous to the Cooperative.

ENGR. JUN S. CAPULONG
PBAC, Chairman
NEECO II

(PDI -- Aug. 1, 2 & 3, 2001)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

July 29, 2001

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The National Housing Authority is inviting interested contractors who have completed similar land development works (at least 50% of Estimated Contract Cost) within the last three (3) years and accredited with PCAB/IAC, to prequalify and bid for the contract listed as follows:

Bid Package	Scope of Works	Project Cost (Million)	PCAB Category	IAC Class.
A. San Jose Resettlement Project, Bgy. San Jose, Occidental Mindoro	Land Dev't, roadworks, & drainage works	P6.40	B	Medium A for Roads
B. Menzi Housing Project, Isabela, Basilan	Const. of 44 housing units	P3.60	B	Medium A for Building

A. Eligibility Statement forms and bid documents/plans are available at the Office of the BAC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, NHA Main Building, Diliman, Quezon City upon submission of the following: a) Letter of Intent (LOI); b) PCAB/IAC License; c) Certificate of Completion/Acceptance and Contract Agreement of completed similar project; and d) Presentation of the above original documents for authentication purposes.

B. Deadline of submission of LOI/other documents is on **August 14, 2001**. Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on August 16, 2001 at 10:00 a.m. at the Operation Center, 3rd Floor, NHA Main Building, Diliman, Quezon City.

C. Payment of non-refundable fee of P2,500.00 per set shall be received only from authorized representatives.

D. Bid deposits shall be in the form of cash, Manager's or Cashier's Check.

E. NHA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive formally of any defect thereon, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Assistant General Manager
Chairman, Bid and Award Committee

(PDI - Aug. 2, 8 & 13, 2001)

National Power Corporation

GENERATION COMPANY 1

161 Bonifacio Drive Port Area, Manila 1018

GENCO-1

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID (2PQ0299RCC-004)

The GENCO-1 Regional Contracts Committee (RCC) is inviting contractors to prequalify for the re-bidding of SUPPLY OF SECURITY SERVICES FOR HOPEWELL TANK FARM, NAVOTAS AND MALAYA GAS TURBINE PLANT, PILILIA, RIZAL.

Application for prequalification is open to wholly owned Filipino Security Agency with valid license issued by the PNP-SOSIA and with at least three (3) years experience.

Prequalification Forms shall be available for issuance starting **July 20 up to August 10, 2001** at the Contract Management Office (CMO), Third Floor, NPC GENCO-1 Building, 161 Bonifacio Drive, Port Area, Manila. Applicants shall be issued Prequalification Form upon presentation of original copy of the applicant's PNP-SOSIA License, together with the Letter of Intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00) per copy.

For purposes of Prequalification and Bidding activities, the following schedule will be observed:

Submission of Prequalification Documents	- August 15, 2001 (8 am - 5 pm)
Issuance of Bid Documents	- September 24, 2001 (8 am - 5 pm)
Pre-Bid Conference	- October 2, 2001 (10 am)
Submission/Opening of Bids	- October 12, 2001 (10 am)

The NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is the most advantageous to the Corporation. The NPC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparations of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **LORNA T. DY**
Manager, Professional Services Department
and Chairman, RCC

(PDI – July 28, Aug. 2 & 6, 2001)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Quezon City

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites authorized distributors/ dealers to participate in the bidding for the supply and delivery of the following laboratory and pest control equipment:

Lot 1 -	8 units Laboratory Testing Mill 8 units Laboratory Huller
Lot 2 -	8 units Analytical Balance 8 units Top Loading Balance
Lot 3 -	28 units Power Sprayer

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

August 6-8, 2001	- Issuance of List of Pre-qualification Requirements
August 15, 2001	- Deadline of submission of pre-qualification documents
August 20-22, 2001	- Issuance of bid documents
August 24, 2001 (10:00 AM)	- Pre-bidding conference
August 31, 2001	
(9:15-10:00 AM)	- Submission of bid proposals
(10:15 AM)	Opening of bid proposals

Pre-qualification forms and requirements can be secured from and submitted to PBAC Secretariat ODAFA, 7th Floor, Matimyas Building, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City. Bidding documents may likewise be secured from PBAC Secretariat and the same shall be issued to pre-qualified bidders upon payment of P2,000.00 non-refundable fee.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY/INFORMALITY OF THE BIDS RECEIVED AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH ARE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY.

(Sgd.) **EDGAR S. ASUNCION**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI – Aug. 2, 3 & 6, 2001)

Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission

4/F Presidential Management Staff Building, Arlegui St.,
San Miguel, Manila
Telephone Nos. +632 7342102; +632 7335488; +632 7335448
Telefax Nos. +632 7342217; +632 7342218

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission-Project Management Office (PRRC-PMO) is inviting all eligible bidders for the printing of about 7,000 copies of reference materials, a sub-component of the DANIDA-funded Danish Assistance to the Pasig River Rehabilitation Program with the following specifications:

Size : 81/4" x 10 3/4"
Cover Stock : Foldkote 12, full color, matte laminate
Inside Stock : Book 60, one color
No. of Pages : 220 pages
Binding : Perfect Smythe
Printing : Offset
Format : Diskette Ready
Estimated Cost : 1.7M

Interested bidders shall submit their Application for Eligibility to the Chairperson, Bidding and Awards Committee (BAC), PRRC-PMO, 4th Floor, PMS Bldg. Arlegui St., Malacañang, Manila, NOT LATER THAN 5:00 p.m. from **August 3, 2001** to **August 16, 2001**. Eligibility Statement Forms may be obtained from PRRC-BAC Office.

Those who are eligible to bid for the project are duly licensed individuals for single or sole proprietorship, partnership or corporations and printing industries that will form themselves into a joint venture that intend to be jointly liable for the contract.

Eligible and ineligible bidders shall be notified by PRRC-BAC through telephone or fax on **August 18, 2001**. Thereafter, eligible bidders shall get their Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable payment of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00) each from the PRRC-BAC during the Pre-Bid conference on **September 2, 2001** at the PRRC-BAC Office.

The deadline for the submission of Bid Documents and Price Proposals, and the Opening of Bids will be on **September 17, 2001** at 2:00 p.m. at the PRRC-BAC Office.

All particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Bid Security, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of E.O. No. 302 and its implementing rules and regulations as amended by E.O. No. 262 dated **July 5, 2000** and other applicable rules and regulations.

The PRRC-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive minor informalities, or accept such bids which will be the most advantageous to the government. The PRRC-BAC for any reason may annul the bidding process at any time prior to the awarding of the contract without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder/s. Decision of PRRC-BAC is final and binding.

(Sgd.) **BINGLE H.B. GUTIERREZ**
Chairperson, BAC

(PDI - Aug. 2, 3 & 4, 2001)

INQUIRER TRIVIA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Tears

Q. Why do tears streaming down our cheeks taste salty?

A. Tears are mainly made of water, oils, sodium bicarbonate (baking soda), and *salt*. They are normally salty because they are derived from the circulatory system, which has a salt composition of about 0.9 percent. Tear gland pouches in each of your upper eyelid are joined together in a weepy group that drips tears over the eyeball through a dozen of tubes. Blinking spreads the tears, like windshield wipers spread washer fluid, and sweeps the salty water toward two holes in the inner corner of the eye. The holes drain into the nose, which runs if there's a flood of tears. Crying is too great a flood for the drains to handle, and so tears overflow. Tears are also sterile because they contain bacteria-destroying enzymes, which provide a measure of protection against infection.

For the Record. Human tears are not the saltiest. Seagulls, which catch and eat saltwater fish, build up a lot of salt in their bodies. Their tears help carry the extra salt, which could be harmful, safely out of their systems.

Past Forward. This day 1968: A powerful earthquake toppled the Ruby Towers apartment building in Manila, leaving 207 dead.

WORD WATCH

Seismophobia (size-moh foh-bi'uh) : fear of earthquakes.

PDI – Aug. 2, 2001

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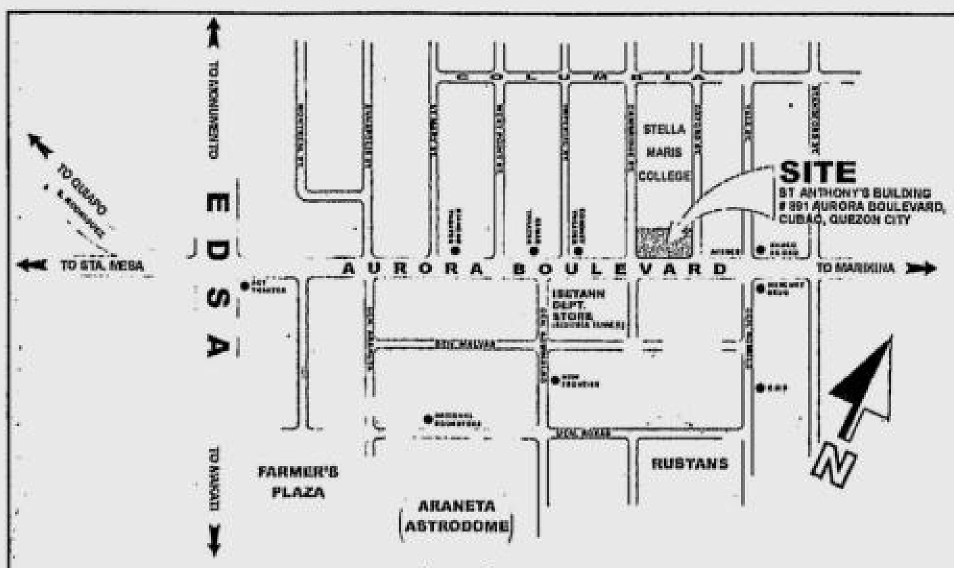

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LIFESTYLE
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

COR-30
ASPIRIN
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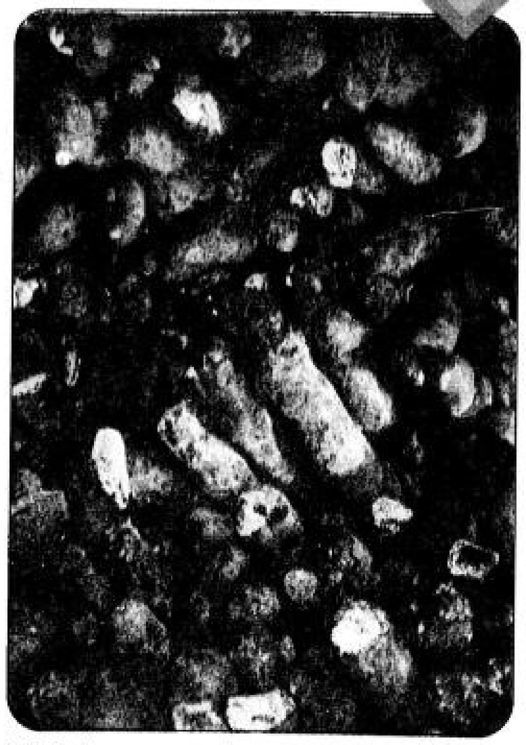
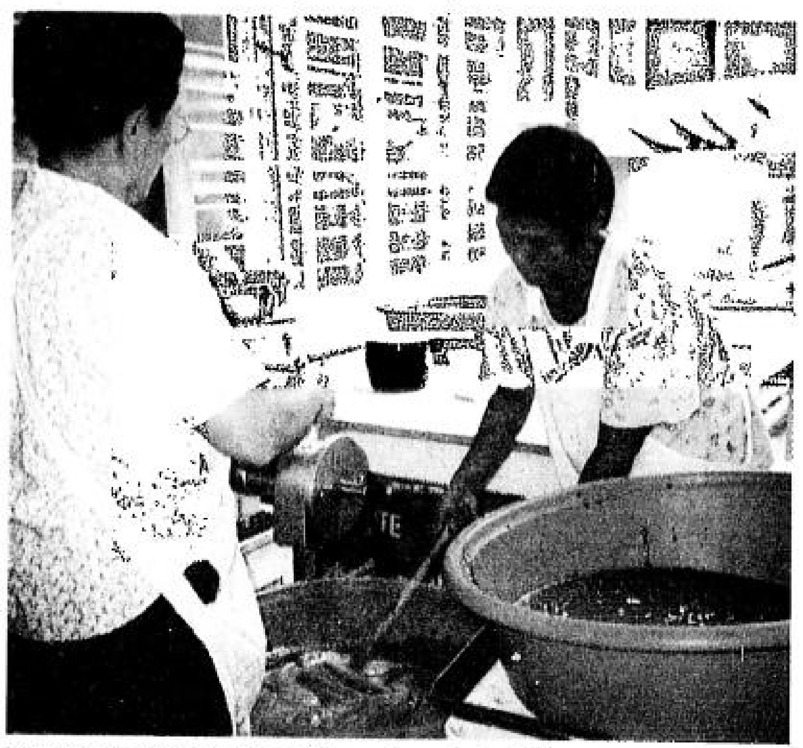
Take it once a day to prevent
HEART ATTACK



UBE tubers are stacked in a dry place for the lean months of June to September.



THE *UBE* mixture is passed through a grinder till fine.

UBE Dimples take longer to cook than the jam. Note the red apple timer (middle) and one of three slabs of concrete (foreground, right) to keep the big *kawali* in place during the heavy mixing.

AT RIGHT are stacks of Ube Dimples. In the foreground, left, is Halo-Halo and at right are more Ube Dimples unmasked.

Good jam from the good nuns of Tagaytay

By EUFEMIA C. ESTRADA

IF you're from Metro Manila, you don't have to go all the way to Baguio for your favorite *ube* jam. Closer is Tagaytay where the Good Shepherd nuns of Maryridge make the ultimate *ube* jam.

It is mere coincidence that *ube* jam is Bahay Pastulan's (the Maryridge outlet) bestseller just like it is Mountain Maid's (the Good Shepherd Baguio outlet).

Three years ago, Sr. Joseph Olaguer, who is in charge of the Maryridge community apostolate, stumbled on a discovery.

Tagaytay was teeming with the root crop *ube* and there was not much of a market for it. This information came up in a casual conversation with the wife of the farmer who supplied the convent with the *buko* they needed for their *buko* pie. Sister Joseph had earlier granted a loan to the farmer and, in appreciation, his wife called on Sister Joseph bearing gifts of *ube*. That offering started a mini livelihood for the women of the community.

Guided by two principles for entrepreneurship, Sister Joseph started experimenting with *ube* jam. The first principle is that if your product is not original, it must be better even if it turns out to be more expensive. Original their *ube* jam is not although it is not a copy of the Baguio recipe. Better? Well, as they say, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Try another scoop. When complimented on the quality of their *ube* jam, Sister Joseph modestly attributed it to the Tagaytay *ube* they are using.

The second principle is that the materials needed must be readily available. And as we have mentioned earlier, *ube* is grown abundantly in Tagaytay.

After the preparation of the *ube* jam had been perfected, Sister Joseph turned to making *pastillas de ube*. She promptly got in touch with their former carpenter from Bulacan who brought in his son-in-law's friend to teach how to make *pastillas de ube*.

Dimples

In the process of mastering the art, Sister Joseph thought of rolling the mixture into balls instead of the usual logs. Another nun suggested they poke a hole in the middle and call them Ube Dimples.

Nothing is left to chance in the preparation of the *ube* jam and *pastillas*. The women who cook these know the exact heat needed and the time (with the help of a timer) it takes to cook one batch in a big wok.

You don't have to worry about the handling. All the women workers wear hairnets and plastic gloves while rolling the *ube* into balls.

When Sister Joseph first came to Maryridge in 1993, she says "there was nothing." She saw the itinerant vendors in the area with so much time on their hands and thought how she could help them become more productive.

She started with soap-making (Hamog Sabon), but there was no market. Sister Joseph borrowed the money earmarked for the soap project to go into *buko* pie production. She had the garage converted into a small baking area, but it took all of a year to perfect their *buko* pie. The other nuns in the convent who served as taste testers were hard to please.

With the recipe perfected, Sister Joseph started with *buko* pies made to order. The people attending seminars became their first customers. Early orders totaled about 20 pies a month. When the doorbell started ringing every 10 minutes for *buko* pie, Sister Joseph knew she had to do something. It was getting to be disruptive of the convent's main thrust.

Sister Joseph expanded the working area, which now extends to what was once the Refectory and two years ago put up the Bahay Pastulan store as outlet.

Bahay Pastulan now employs 15 women for the operations. Women who could neither read nor write were among those trained. Aside from the *buko* pie, *ube* jam and *pastillas*, they also make *polvoron* (recipe from the Maya cookbook), chocolate crinkles and *achara*, which rates 10 on a scale of 1-10. They also carry Shepherd's Cookies (also known as Angel Cookies) made by the contemplative nuns of the same order.

During the Christmas holidays they also make Apple Pie, which Sister Joseph says one American

GOOD/ p.C3

DELICIOUS
LECHON
Australian Roast Calf*
U.S. Roast Turkey w/ Stuffing
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Lechon Baboy
*Roast On The Spot.
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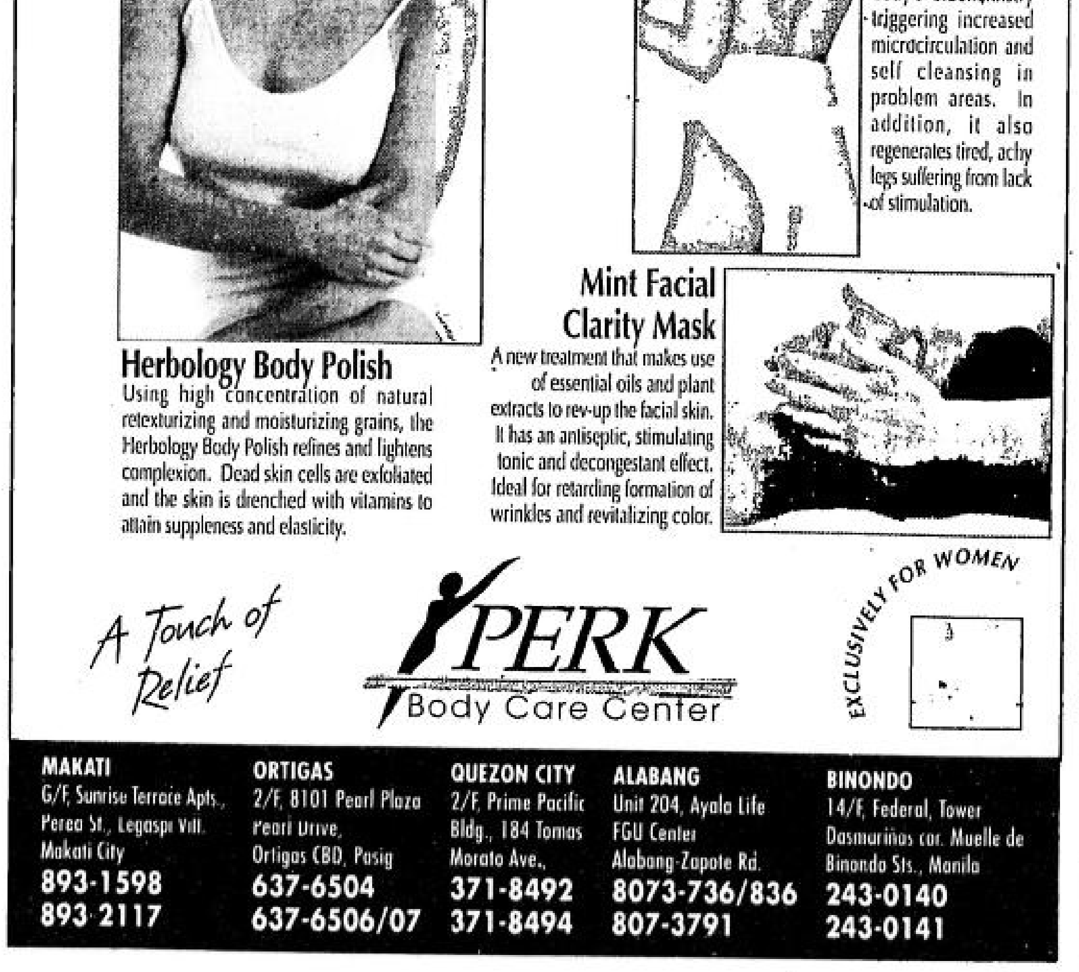
The Maya Kitchen
CULINARY ARTS CENTER
MAKE MONEY WITH MAYA
More and more people are venturing into the food business because it has proven to be profitable, challenging and exciting. But one has to completely grasp the essentials of the business to really succeed.
The Maya Kitchen Culinary Arts Center will hold courses that are helpful for those budding restaurateurs, bakers and caterers. Learn the preparation of all-time favorite dishes that complete an excellent menu. Check out the schedules below.
ONE - DAY SPECIALS
Popular Catering Dishes: Aug. 4 (Sat) 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Morcon, Galantina, Pork Asado, Soy Chicken, Roast Pork, Baked Macaroni, All Meat Paella and special Gulaman desserts with lecture on how to estimate portions. P 750.
Baking with Institutional Mixes: Aug. 4 (Sat) 1:30 -5 p.m. Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road), Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco-Banana Loaf, Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Pretzel,Hotdog on Stick, Mango Samurai, Butterscotch Squares and Chocolate Crinkles. Includes lecture on cost profit analysis. P500.
Japanese Cooking: Aug. 11 (Sat) 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Miso Soup, Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi. Basic Sushi preparations. P750.
Pasta Making: Aug. 11 (Sat) 1:30-5 p.m. Lasagna, Chicken Cannelloni. assorted pasta dishes and sauces (Garlic Fettucini, Carbonara, Putanesca, Pesto and Negra). Bonus: homemade pasta making. P600
Maya Quick & Easy Gulaman Delights: Aug. 11. (Sat) 3-5 p.m. Cathedral Window, Coffee Jelly, Almond Jelly, Fruity Chewy Salad, 24-Hour Salad, Fresh Crab Salad, and Buko Pandan. With food styling presentation.P 350.
Pancit-Pancit: Aug.18 (Sat) 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Pancit Chinese Style, Bami, Palabok, Sotanghon (Korean style), Mami, Bachoy, Buko Pancit, Fried Pancit. P600
CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS - ON:
Cooking I (Basic Cooking). For Messman, Stewards and Beginners: Aug. 7-10 or Aug. 21-24 (T-F) 1:30-5p.m. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes: Techniques of deboning chicken and fish; Basic garnishing; Table Setting and napkin folding; Actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. P 2,200.
Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking) For Career Cooks: Aug. 14-16 (Tues.-Th) or 28, 29 & 31 (TWF) 9 a.m. -4 p.m. Coverage: menu planning, international standard techniques of preparing stocks, soups, sauces, dressings, salads, main dishes, homemade cold cuts, etc., applicable to 1001 recipes including plate and platter presentation. Free lunch. P2,500.
Basic Baking: Aug. 17 (Fri) or Sept. 1 (Sat) 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Hands-on techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more. P1,500 with free lunch.
Basic Cake Decoration: Aug. 18 & 25 (Sat) 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. Lecture-workshop on fundamentals of cake decorating: coloring, designing, template, icing (boiled, butter, caramel, chocolate, sugar icing); basic borders, jelly lettering, basic flower making and bunching and motif. Free decorating tips. P 2,000
Bakery & Bakeshop Operations: Aug. 25 (Sat) 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cakes including costing, production batching with actual hands-on. P 1,500.
For reservations and inquiries, visit the Maya Kitchen at the 8th Floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road). Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph



Health and fitness spa for women
Detoxification Massage Therapy
Specifically designed towards the lymphatic drainage system to efficiently dispose toxic wastes from the body. It is equivalent to 1 hour of strenuous exercise. Improved muscle texture, elimination of cellulite, weightloss and renewed strength have been observed as the natural consequences of this treatment.
Body Shaping Massage Therapy
The interplay of the thermo-active "cellulite" gel and the warm wraps agitates the body's biochemistry triggering increased microcirculation and self cleansing in problem areas. In addition, it also regenerates tired, achy legs suffering from lack of stimulation.
Herbology Body Polish
Using high concentration of natural retexturizing and moisturizing grains, the Herbology Body Polish refines and lightens complexion. Dead skin cells are exfoliated and the skin is drenched with vitamins to attain suppleness and elasticity.
Mint Facial Clarity Mask
A new treatment that makes use of essential oils and plant extracts to rev-up the facial skin. It has an antiseptic, stimulating tonic and decongestant effect. Ideal for retarding formation of wrinkles and revitalizing color.
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PERK
Body Care Center
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893-1598
893-2117
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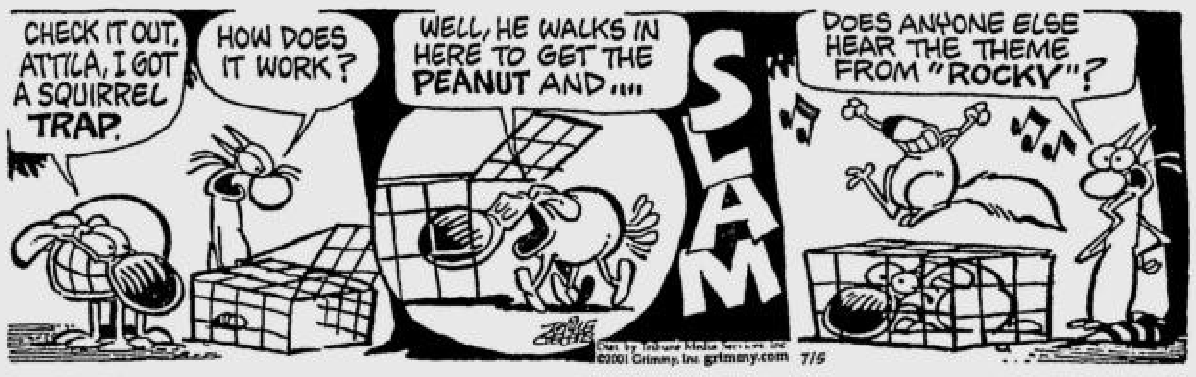
637-6504
637-6506/07
QUEZON CITY
2/F, Prime Pacific Bldg., 184 Tomas Morato Ave.,
371-8492
371-8494
ALABANG
Unit 204, Ayala Life FGU Center Alabang-Zapote Rd.
8073-736/836
807-3791
BINONDO
14/F, Federal, Tower Dasmariñas cor. Muelle de Binondo Sts., Manila
243-0140
243-0141

Facts About Naturally Brewed Kikkoman Soy Sauce

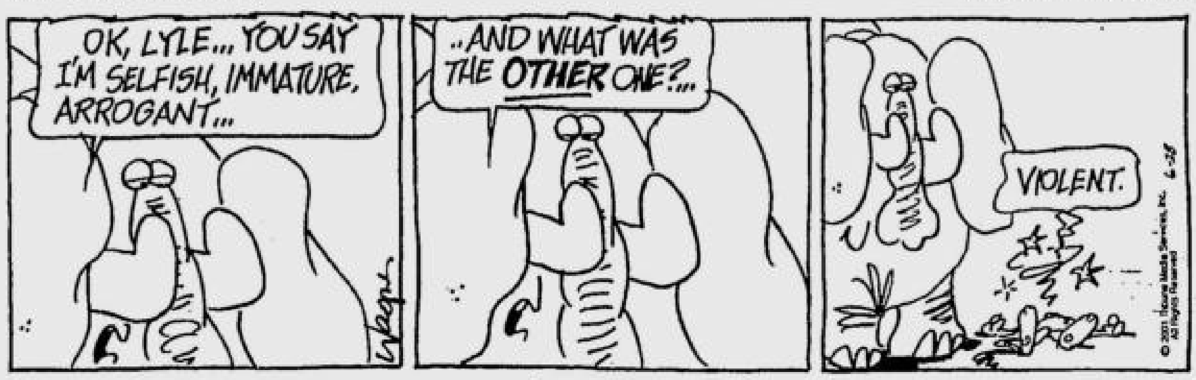
17th century soy sauce production in Japan.
Kikkoman Soy Sauce is naturally brewed. The production method used to make Kikkoman Soy Sauce is perhaps the oldest and most authentic, using a precise set of guidelines that dates back centuries.
It takes several months to produce naturally brewed Kikkoman while it takes only days to make chemically produced soy sauce.
Naturally brewed Kikkoman Soy Sauce has a delicate, almost transparent, redish-brown color while the chemically produced soy sauce is usually black, opaque in color.
Naturally brewed Kikkoman Soy Sauce has a delicate and richer scent, while chemically produced soy sauce has an obvious chemical aroma.
Naturally brewed Kikkoman Soy Sauce enhances the flavors of meat, fish and vegetables.

Use naturally brewed Kikkoman Soy Sauce made from high quality soy beans and wheat.
When it comes to your health, there is no compromise!
KIKKOMAN
Gives life to every dish!

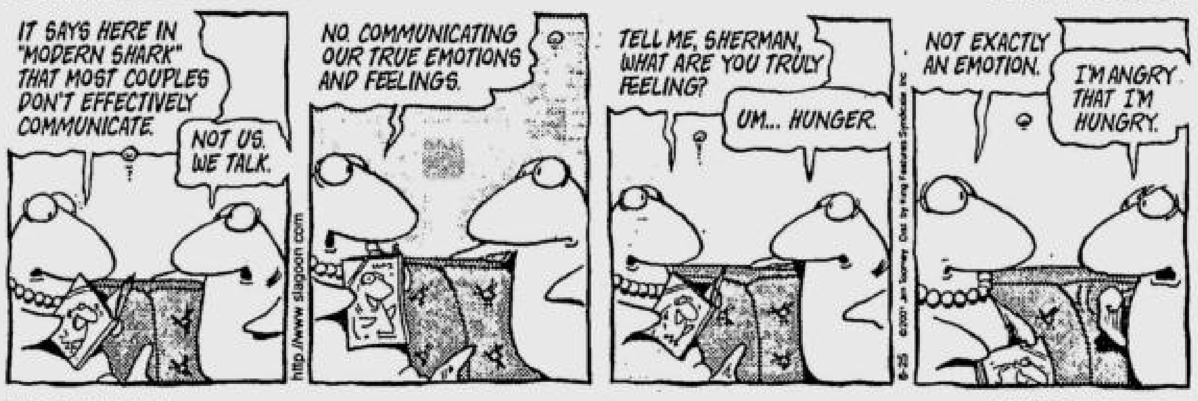
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


CHECK IT OUT, ATTILA, I GOT A SQUIRREL TRAP.
HOW DOES IT WORK?
WELL, HE WALKS IN HERE TO GET THE PEANUT AND....
SLAM
DOES ANYONE ELSE HEAR THE THEME FROM "ROCKY"?
Dist. by Tribune Media Services, Inc. ©2001 Grimmy, Inc. grimmy.com 7/5

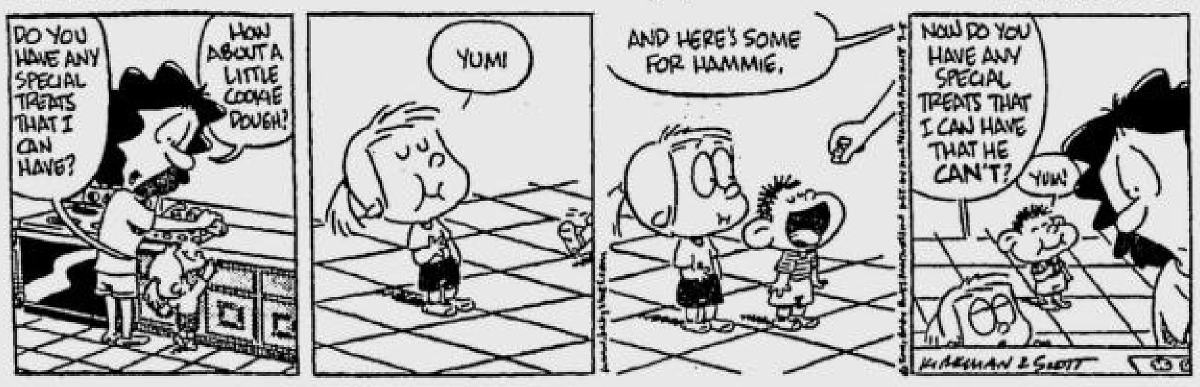
ANIMAL CRACKER BY FRED WAGNER


OK, LYLE... YOU SAY I'M SELFISH, IMMATURE, ARROGANT...
..AND WHAT WAS THE OTHER ONE?...
VIOLENT.
6-28

SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


IT SAYS HERE IN "MODERN SHARK" THAT MOST COUPLES DON'T EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE.
NOT US. WE TALK.
NO. COMMUNICATING OUR TRUE EMOTIONS AND FEELINGS.
http://www.slagoon.com
TELL ME, SHERMAN, WHAT ARE YOU TRULY FEELING?
UM... HUNGER.
NOT EXACTLY AN EMOTION.
I'M ANGRY THAT I'M HUNGRY.

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL TREATS THAT I CAN HAVE?
HOW ABOUT A LITTLE COOKIE DOUGH?
YUM!
AND HERE'S SOME FOR HAMMIE.
NOW DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL TREATS THAT I CAN HAVE THAT HE CAN'T?
YUM!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Isabel Allende, Peter O'Toole, Carroll O'Connor, Mary-Louise Parker, Edward Furlong, Victoria Jackson

Happy Birthday: You'll be tempted to take on way too much this year. Step back and re-evaluate what you really want to accomplish. If you are disciplined and hard-working, you will reach those goals—but only if you're not sidetracked by all the other activities and possibilities. Your numbers: 3, 17, 28, 31, 36, 39

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You may think that someone who has been paying attention is interested in a relationship. Think again. It is apparent that this person is trying to wangle information out of you.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You need to get away—if not physically then mentally. Take a look at your options and make the arrangements. Your interest in foreign cultures may lead to exotic destinations.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Overspending on yourself or your partner will make you angry with yourself. Check your financial situation thoroughly and develop a budget that you can live with.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Get legal advice before you take action on a personal matter. Your emotional partner may be uncertain about his or her feelings. Find out where you stand in order to get on with your life.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You should look into moving if an interesting position turns up in a different region. Not everyone you live with will be thrilled, but the prospects look good.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Relatives or close friends will meddle in private affairs if you confide in them. Work any frustrations out by participating in competitive games.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You won't be too agreeable today. Your attitude and snide comments will cause turmoil at home, which could be the spark that ignites changes that would lead to loneliness.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Begin working on projects that could make money. Look into starting a small business, working out of your home and cutting overhead. Don't be afraid to go after your dreams.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your financial situation will be unstable. Don't be too worried; just stop spending unnecessarily. Be especially careful with joint finances.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Your emotions will take over if you let others get to you. Be aware that their comments are made to upset you and get a reaction. Don't rise to the bait.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Someone is trying to hide something from you. Ask questions and be specific. Don't let others railroad you into a situation under false pretenses.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You will meet new acquaintances; however, be careful. If they appear to be even the slightest bit unstable, keep your distance.

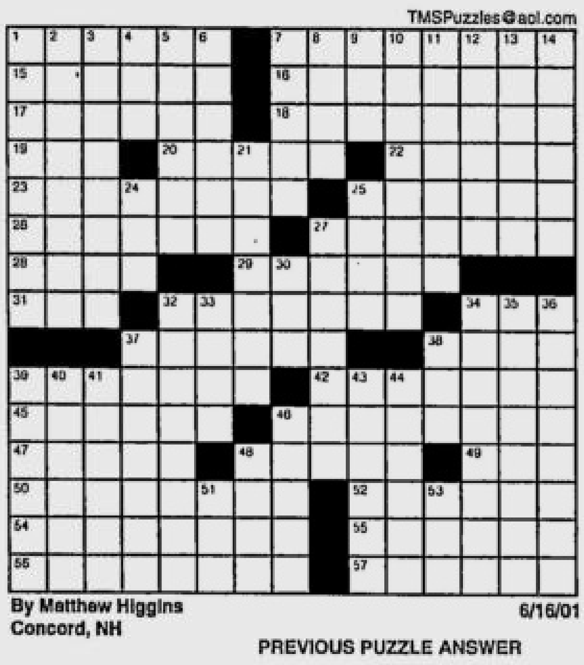
Birthday Baby: You are bright-eyed and eager to conquer the world. You have a great imagination and a wonderful memory. You are quick to respond and empathetic to loved ones.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Unassuming
7 Queensland capital
15 Take to the skies
16 Traffic circles
17 Greek advisor at Troy
18 Writers on the subject of love
19 Fix beginning?
20 Comprehend
22 Epsilon preceder
23 Elaborate public speeches
25 Befitting his spouse
26 Those with aspirations
27 Origins
28 Fencer's foil
29 Melville's Pequod
31 Blushing
32 Believers in God
34 TV regulatory agcy.
37 Furnishes with new weapons
38 Level
39 Ancient books on parchment
42 First part of "The Divine Comedy"
45 Cactus surface pit
46 Undaunted
47 Banquet
48 Immature insect
49 __ juris
50 Delighted
52 Seek to attain
54 Oxford fastener
55 Soccer shot
56 Presented formally
57 Issues commands

DOWN
1 Available workers
2 Past prime
3 Unsound
4 Consume
5 Inexpensive cigar
6 Overwhelming fear
7 Blatant self-assurance
8 Very easy victory
9 Simpson trial judge Lance
10 Tightly packed fish
11 More concise
12 Supermarket passageways
13 Annoy
14 Compositions
21 Replies
24 Definite article
25 Whipping scar
27 More verbose
30 The man just mentioned
32 Edgar Allan Poe story, "The __ Heart"
33 Hearty mate?
34 Roosevelt's chat spot
35 Critical faultfinder
36 Bishops' staffs
37 Perched
38 Part of AT&T
39 Most secure
40 Nativity scene
41 Sound judgment
43 Hopi's neighbor
44 Brendon of "The Mummy"
46 Confronted
48 Grown-up nits
51 Black gooey substance
53 Stenographer's notebook

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH
6/16/01

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

A	N	T	I	S	■	R	E	B	A	■	T	S	A	R
G	O	O	D	E	■	E	M	I	T	■	A	P	S	O
A	R	R	O	W	S	M	I	T	H	■	S	E	T	S
R	A	I	L	■	T	I	N	■	L	E	S	L	I	E
■	■	■	A	B	A	T	E	■	E	V	E	L	■	■
L	E	S	T	E	R	■	N	O	T	E	■	B	U	S
A	N	T	E	S	■	E	T	R	E	■	F	O	N	T
S	T	A	R	T	L	E	■	A	S	A	R	U	L	E
E	R	G	S	■	I	R	A	N	■	L	E	N	I	N
R	Y	E	■	E	N	O	L	■	U	S	E	D	T	O
■	■	C	O	L	E	■	T	I	T	O	V	■	■	■
S	H	O	A	L	S	■	O	N	E	■	E	R	A	S
C	O	A	T	■	M	O	O	N	S	T	R	U	C	K
A	R	C	H	■	A	R	N	E	■	A	S	S	A	Y
R	A	H	S	■	N	E	A	R	■	D	E	E	D	S

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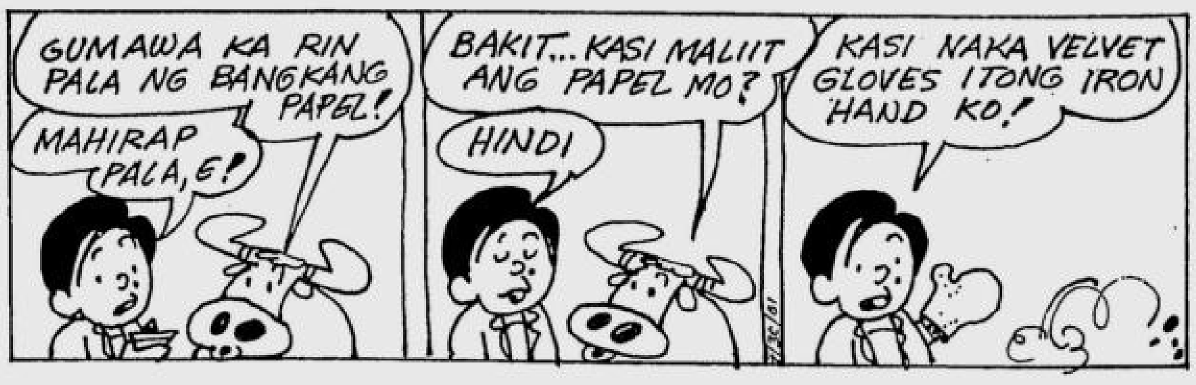
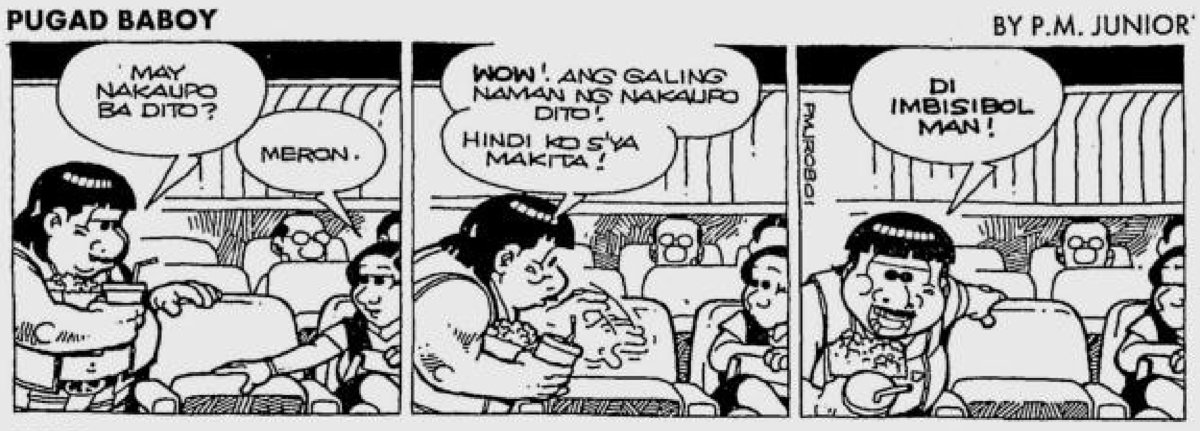
6/16/01

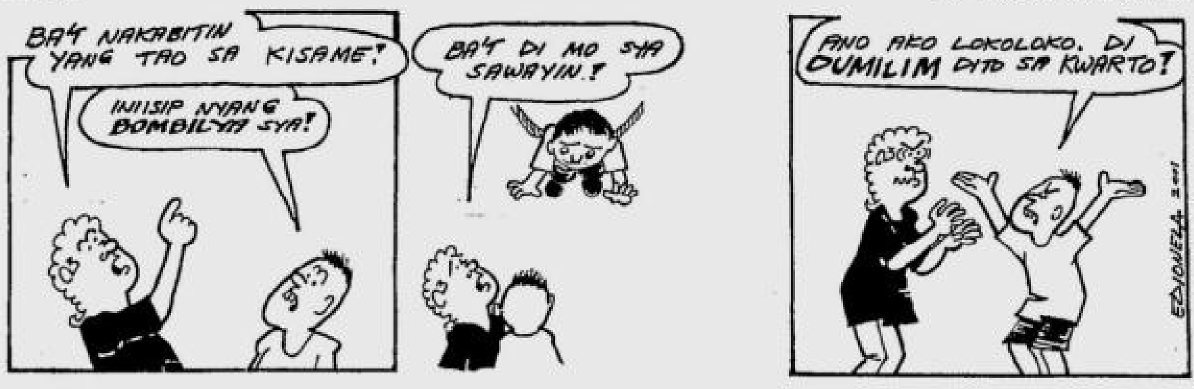
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


GUMAWA KA RIN PALA NG BANGKANG PAPEL!
MAHIRAP PALA, E!
BAKIT... KASI MALIIT ANG PAPEL MO?
HINDI
KASI NAKA VELVET GLOVES ITONG IRON HAND KO!

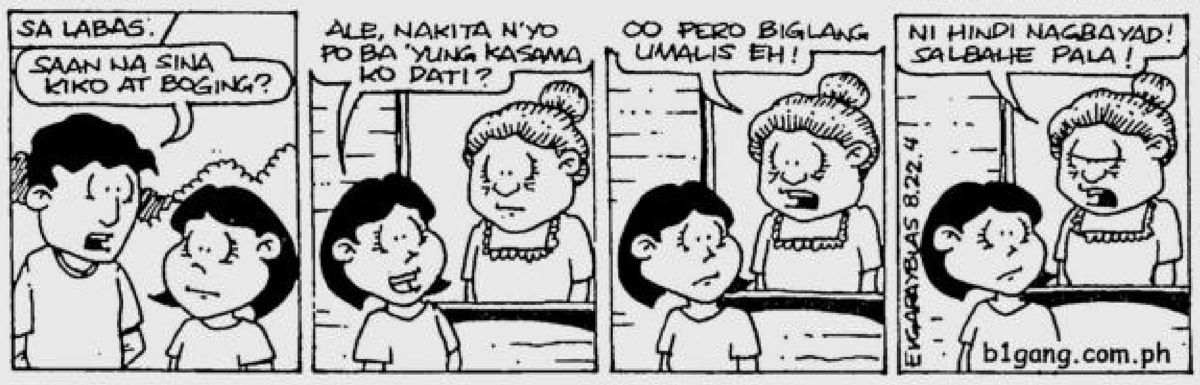
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAY NAKAUPO BA DITO?
MERON.
WOW! ANG GALING NAMAN NG NAKAUPO DITO!
HINDI KO S'YA MAKITA!
PAJROBO!
DI IMBISIBOL MAN!

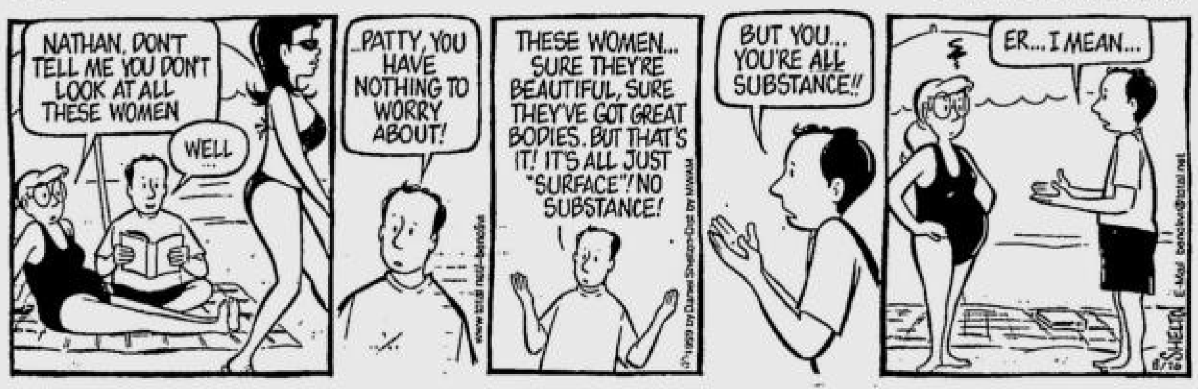
SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


BA'T NAKABITIN YANG TAO SA KISAME?
INIISIP NYANG BOMBILYA SYA!
BA'T DI MO SYA SAWAYIN?
ANO AKO LOKOLOKO. DI DUMILIM DITO SA KWARTO?
EDIONELA 2001

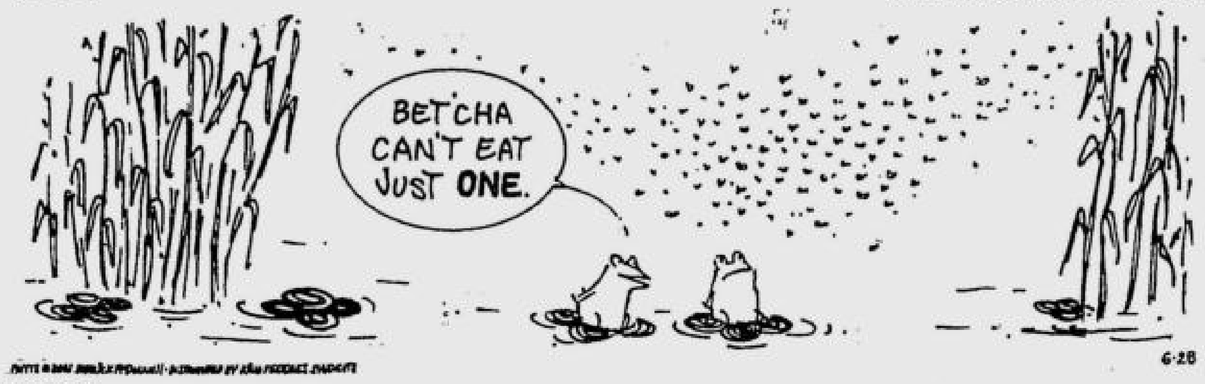
B1 GANG BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


SA LABAS.
SAAN NA SINA KIKO AT BOGING?
ALE, NAKITA N'YO PO BA 'YUNG KASAMA KO DATI?
OO PERO BIGLANG UMALIS EH!
NI HINDI NAGBAYAD! SALBAHE PALA!
EVGARAYBIAS 8.22.4
b1gang.com.ph

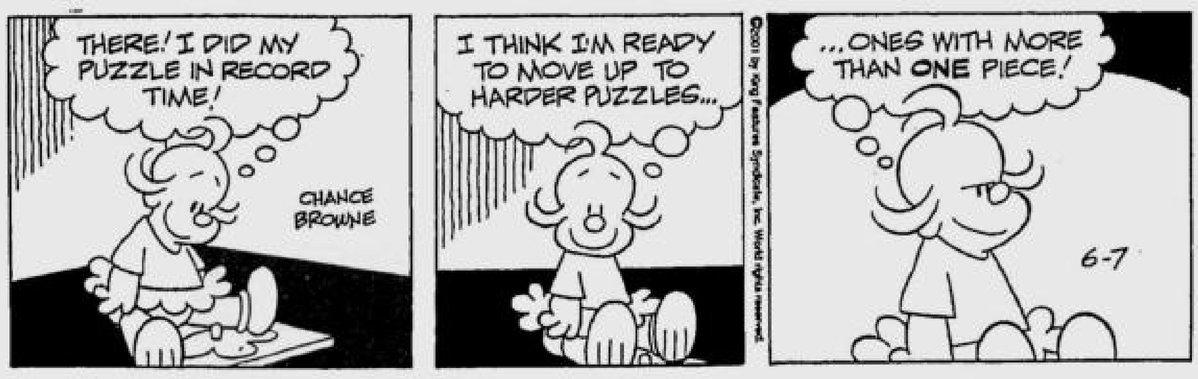
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


NATHAN, DON'T TELL ME YOU DON'T LOOK AT ALL THESE WOMEN
WELL ...
...PATTY, YOU HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!
THESE WOMEN... SURE THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL, SURE THEY'VE GOT GREAT BODIES. BUT THAT'S IT! IT'S ALL JUST "SURFACE"! NO SUBSTANCE!
BUT YOU... YOU'RE ALL SUBSTANCE!!
ER... I MEAN...
SHELTON

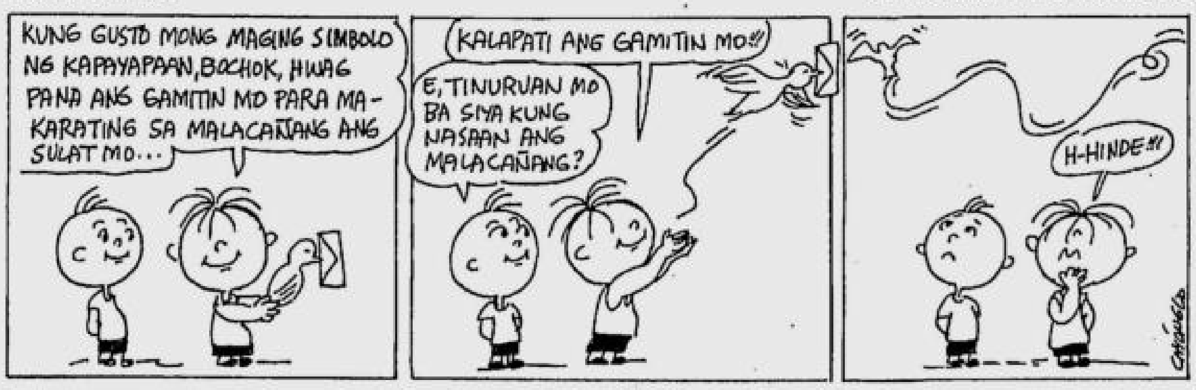
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


BET'CHA CAN'T EAT JUST ONE.
6-28

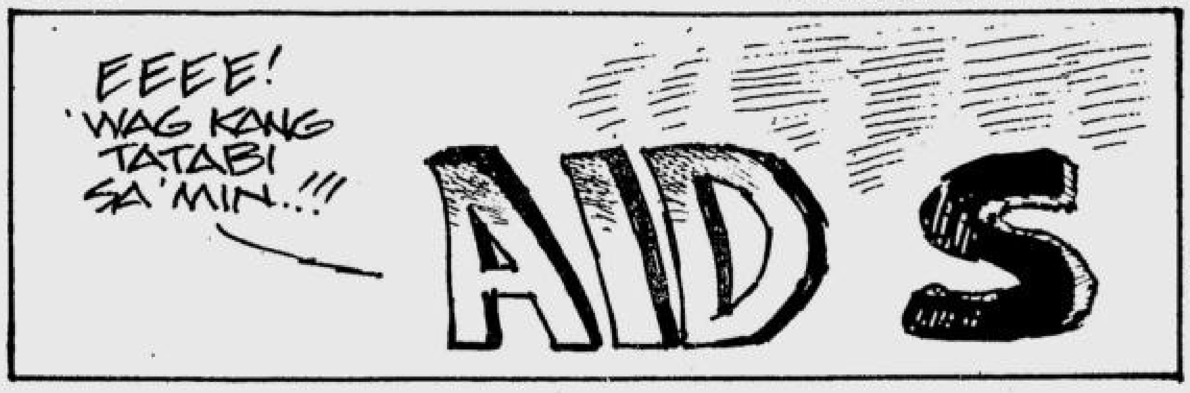
HI AND LOIS BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


THERE! I DID MY PUZZLE IN RECORD TIME!
CHANCE BROWNE
I THINK I'M READY TO MOVE UP TO HARDER PUZZLES...
©2001 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
...ONES WITH MORE THAN ONE PIECE!
6-7

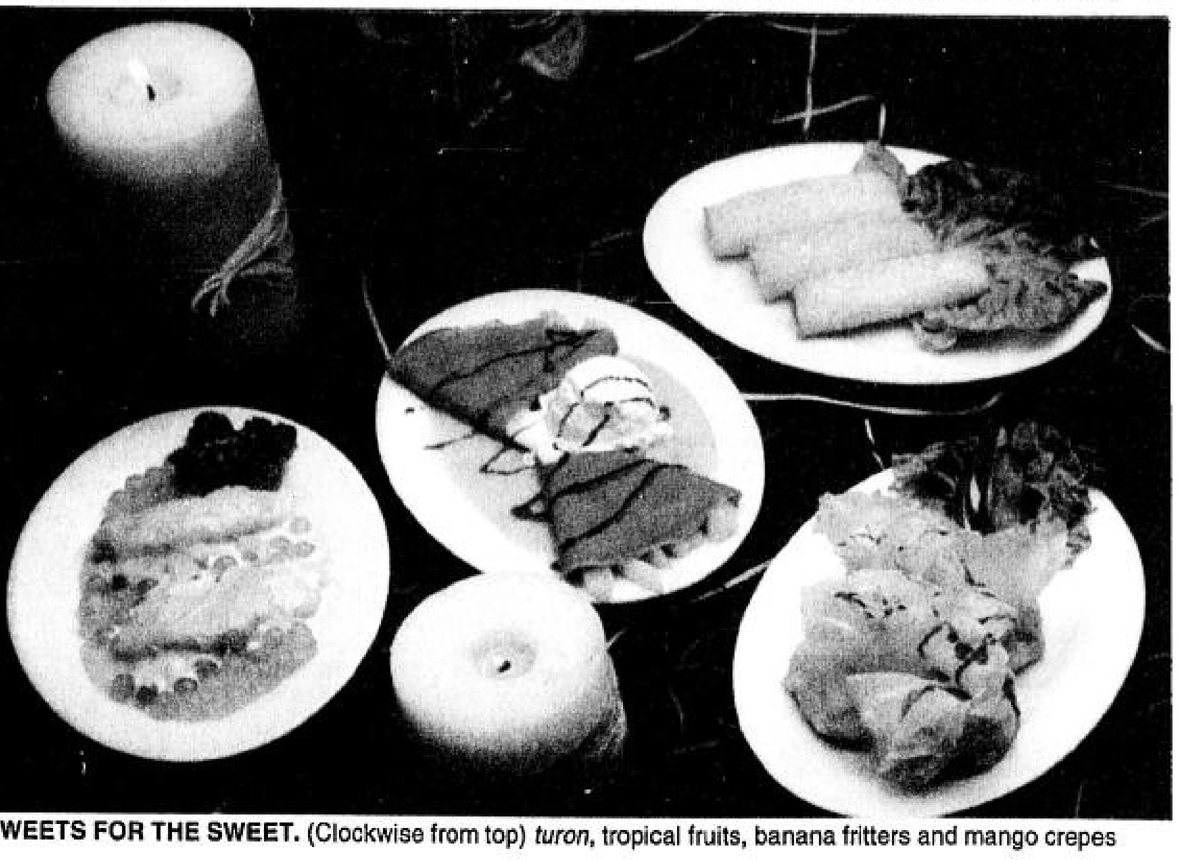
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


KUNG GUSTO MONG MAGING SIMBOLO NG KAPAYAPAAN, BOCHOK, HWAG PANA ANG GAMITIN MO PARA MAKARATING SA MALACAÑANG ANG SULAT MO...
KALAPATI ANG GAMITIN MO!!!
E, TINURUAN MO BA SIYA KUNG NASAAN ANG MALACAÑANG?
H-HINDE!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


EEEE! 'WAG KANG TATABI SA'MIN..!!!
AIDS

Shared joy



SWEETS FOR THE SWEET. (Clockwise from top) *turon*, tropical fruits, banana fritters and mango crepes

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

NINA and Boy Santiago's restaurant Salo Restobar (34 Sgt. Esguerra Ave., South Triangle, QC; tel. 925-3295) was only 6 months old when we visited (after a strong recommendation from Mandy Navasero), and already it had evolved a menu of 60+ items, and a fairly hefty breakfast *carte.* And let me say at the start that everything I tasted pleased me well.

I also like the name and its resonances (*sumalo, saluhan, magsalo, makisalo, pagsaluhan, kasalo, salu-salo*): Eating together, joining someone or others at a meal, eating from the same plate or table, putting together a shared *salu-salo*.

Boy and Nina are both from Pampanga, and so the tastes of that food-loving province are prominent on the menu—not as non-Pampangos usually know them, but as Pampangos prepare and serve them at home. I left it to them to choose dishes to taste, and it was fun; I felt as if I had borrowed their palates that day to supplement mine (basically Ilonggo/Tagalog). It was an adventure in tasting a regional food through homegrown tastes and memories.

NINA and Boy Santiago

The Kilawin Kapampangan, for example, has pork meat and liver cooked in vinegar—and served with a fresh *lacatan* banana and *patis* (*siling labuyo* on the side if you wish it). That is their home treatment of it, and we non-Pampangueños loved it. The Butterfly Catfish (crisp-fried *hito*) was accompanied by a relish: Strips of mustard greens in a vinegar-*bagoong* dressing. I had never tasted it that way, but my borrowed and my own variegated palates purred in approval.

The pan-Philippine *sinigang* (soured in different degrees) came in shrimp, pork, pink salmon and fish head versions: the *maya-maya* fish head soured with tamarind, *miso* and fresh tomatoes, and with *mustasa*; the pink salmon belly and head soured by *kamias* and tomatoes, and with radishes and mustard greens.

Sisig (pork meat, liver, lungs) was crisp and sizzling, with a fried egg in center and mayonnaise on the side. Mickey Fenix of Today's food page said that she had inquired on the Net, and found that Pampangos and others do use mayonnaise on *sisig*, yet some won't hear of it.

Even breakfast was sampled: Very crisp, fine, sautéed to featherlightness chili corned beef shreds with, of course, two fried or scrambled eggs, plain or garlic rice, and pickled papaya.

Asian fare

The bill of fare is Asian, however, with Philippine dishes dominant. We started with a wonderful pomelo salad: Davao *suha*, celery, peanuts, shallots, *wansoy*, dessicated coconut, chicken fillet and shrimps on a bed of lettuce—Thai, it was billed, but it recalled Glenda Barretto's turn-of-the-century Ensalada de Toronja (pomelo, avocado, etc.) at the old Nielson Tower. The sweet and juicy pink Davao fruit is a jewel.

Thai in style, too, are the softshell crabs (from the Visayas), lightly floured and serve with a sweet chili sauce.

The Indonesian/Malaysian Beef Rendang offered spicy, tender beef cubes simmered in coconut milk, tomato sauce, beef broth and chopped chili. A Chinese appetizer consisted of fried bean curd nuggets with soy paste.

Thanks to cooks trained by a Malaysian-Filipino chef, other Asian offerings include: Thai curried fish head and Tom Yam Goong; Japanese eel tempura; Malaysian spicy crab claws or chicken wings; Korean Chap Chae noodles, Malaysian seafood noodles; Indian Chicken Tandoori; Chinese *pechay* rolls stuffed with minced pork. And the Singaporean/Malaysian Hainanese Chicken Rice.

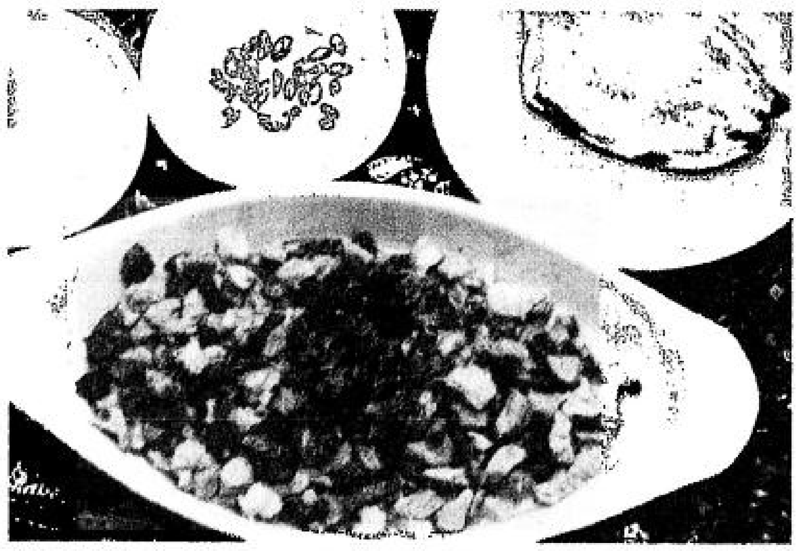
The dessert list included *turon*—banana with jackfruit in an egg wrapper, sugar-sprinkled; banana fritters fried, flour-coated, stuffed with *langka* and served on sweet cream; tropical fruits sliced, wrapped in an egg wrapper, and sprinkled with icing sugar; the Salo Mango Cream Delight (layered graham crackers, cream and ripe mango) and crepes (mango *pandan*, banana and more).

Boy Santiago is with broadcast marketing at ABS-CBN, especially with the MBA games, and so it is understandable that Salo is near ABS-CBN, and often filled with its guests, executives and personnel. He and his wife developed the menu together, although she gets special credit for the easy-on-the-eye decor (Balinese shawls and ceramic plates on the walls; royally purple chair upholstery) and the back-of-the-house operations, especially the cashier's desk, as in many French bistros and Italian *trattorias*, where Papa faces the public and Mama keeps the wheels humming. Mark Santiago, their oldest son is comanager, and handles the sounds; even a young daughter is gaining restaurant experience.

This personal, hands-on supervision extends to all the hours the restaurant is open (7:30-2 a.m. Monday to Saturday; dinner from 6 p.m. on Sundays), and is a major ingredient of its appeal.

Start with *pandan* juice (sweetened or unsweetened), I suggest—and open your palate to a many-flavored Asian *salu-salo*.

BUTTERFLY *hito* with *mustasa*-vinegar-*bagoong* relish



KILAWING *kapampangan* with banana, *sili* and *patis*

Good jam from the good nuns of Tagaytay

(From page C1)

priest makes a special trip for.

Ever on the lookout for something new to offer, Sister Joseph has also come up with Makanata, a combination of *macapuno* and *nata* in syrup, and Halo-Halo, *macapuno* balls flavored with *ube*, *langka*, *pandan* and strawberry. All except the strawberry are natural flavors.

Sister Joseph's efforts have not remained unnoticed. The Asian Institute of Management chose Bahay Pastulan for a case study and with it came a grant of P50,000. The study showed that "inferior resources can come up with superior products."

Hand in hand with the specialty food production, Sister Joseph started a sort of cooperative with an *utang-bayad* scheme. There are now 40 families in the coop.

With profits from Bahay Pastulan, some 50 scholars (elementary level) in the community enjoy a subsidy covering tuition, transportation and allowance.

All this goes to show how much can be done under able leadership.

By the way, if Tagaytay is not in your itinerary for the moment, you can buy Bahay Pastulan products from Marge Barro's Food for the Soul in Makati (tel. 896-1423/7596).

SISTER Joseph with the women who mind the store

EGGPLANTS with pungent sauce

Some like it chili hot

"CHILI cookery does not deserve its stereotype of burning the top of your mouth. Whatever your taste, chilies come in a wide range of flavors and degrees of 'hotness.' They need not dominate food and can be used subtly, to deepen flavor. Regular chili eaters often grow to like their food hotter." Fiery words from writer Miriam Polunin, author of the book "Healing Food." Peking Garden Restaurant proves this with its "Spice Alert" food promotions until Aug. 12, in celebration of its sixth anniversary. Here are recipes to prove the point.

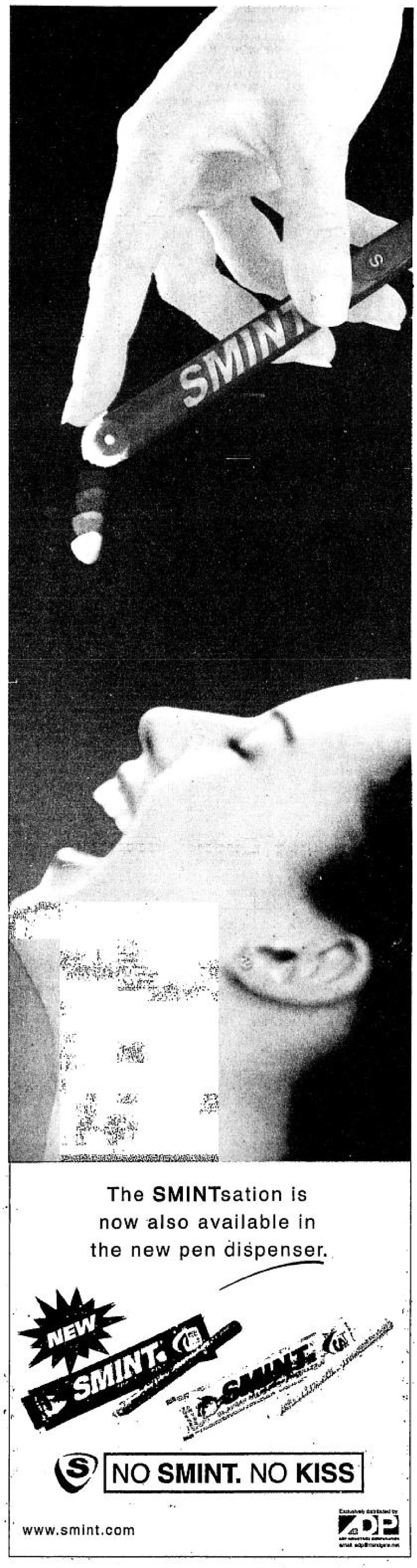
Eggplants on Pungent Sauce

200 g eggplants
50 g dried chili,
50 g red chili
50 g green chili
50 g spring onion

Mix the sliced eggplants with eggs and cornstarch. Deep fry then set aside.

Stir fry dried, red and green chilies, and spring onions in oil. Put some soup stock, chopped chilies, salt, *vetsin*, vinegar and a dash of sugar. Add a little cornstarch.

Pour the cooked pungent sauce on top of the eggplants and serve.



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Learn new hot recipes

JOIN the San Miguel Food Group Culinary Center as they show you how to prepare "Hot Sizzling Recipes" on Aug. 3, 2 p.m. at the Entertainment Area, SM Megamall A. Learn new and delicious recipes from Monterey, Campo Carne, Magnolia Chicken, Magnolia butter and Magnolia Quickmelt you can easily prepare at home for your family. Be ready for games and raffle prizes. Admission is free. Call 671-9876 to -91 local 402/405.

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Trip for two to HK and other big prizes for lucky diners

EAT all you can and get a chance to win an all-expense paid trip for two to Hong Kong, which includes round-trip tickets for two, a three-day, two-night stay in a hotel, daily breakfast and pocket money of $500.

This is the delicious offer of Cabalen, the eat-all-you-can, eat-all-you-want restaurant, in celebration of its 14th anniversary this August.

"It is our way of saying 'thank you' for all the patronage and loyalty through these years," says Cabalen president Maritel Nievera.

Besides the Hong Kong trip, Cabalen offers a 29" Sony Wega Flat TV for the second prize winner. There will be five third prizes of prepaid Nokia 3210 kits. For consolation prizes, Cabalen will be giving away 10 Cabalen gift certificates worth P1,000 each and 50 Nestlé gift packs worth P500.

Until Aug. 31 every Cabalen lunch or dinner buffet customer who makes P300 worth of purchase is entitled to a raffle coupon. The more coupons, the more chances of winning. Diners may join as many times as they can as you enjoy eating. Raffle draw will be on Sept. 8 at Cabalen Katipunan Avenue branch.

Featured for the anniversary month are special dishes such as the crisp and tasty *adobo camaru* (crickets), the exotic *balut à la pobre*, tender sizzling chicken, appetizing *gatang alimasag* and the mouthwatering *hipon sa aligue*. To cap your sumptuous meal, Cabalen serves hot native chocolate using the Pampango's original *batirol*.

AUGUST special: Hipon sa Aligue

HOT native chocolate is the Drink of the Month

Enjoy all these treats in any of Cabalen's eight restaurants located at SM City Manila, SM North Edsa, SM Megamall, Robinsons Place Ermita, Sta. Lucia Grand East Mall, Glorietta III in Ayala Center and on West Avenue and Katipunan Avenue. Call 911-1584.

Below, Cabalen shares recipes two of its August specials.

Gatang Alimasag

2 kg crabs
8 c coconut cream
1/8 c cooking oil
1 pc ginger Tagalog, small
1 clove garlic, native
1 pc red onion, big
3 pc native hot pepper (*sili labuyo*)
2 pc green hot pepper (*sili haba*)
2 tbsp rock salt

Wash and clean crabs. Discard carapace and claws, then set aside. Extract 3 kg grated coconut to 7 c water and set aside. Peel, wash and crush garlic. Peel and slice onions. Peel, wash and slice ginger into strips. Wash spinach, discard hard stem. Wash and slice *sili labuyo*.

Sauté garlic until light brown. Add garlic and cook until golden brown. Add onions and cook until wilted. Add crabs and stir. Add coconut cream, *sili labuyo* and *sili haba*; bring to boil for 2 minutes. Simmer for 15 minutes. Season with salt. Add spinach and continue simmering for 1 minute. Serve.

Adobo Camaru

1 ½ c *camaru* (crickets)
½ c cooking oil
2 tbsp garlic, crushed
¼ c onion, sliced
1 c tomato, sliced
¼ c vinegar
¼ tsp whole black pepper, ground
1 tsp rock salt

Clean *camaru*, removing wings, feet and head. Set aside. Peel and crush garlic. Peel and slice onions. Wash and slice tomatoes.

In a clean container, combine clean *camaru*, vinegar, ground black pepper, salt and garlic. Bring to boil until sauce dries up. Set aside. Sauté garlic until golden brown. Add onions and cook until wilted. Add sliced tomatoes and cook until mushy. Stir. Add marinated *camaru*. Boil for 30 seconds. Reduce fire. Stir. Continue simmering until sauce dries up.

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Mag connects foodies

COOK, the culinary lifestyle magazine, will co-present the first-of-its-kind cooking competition in the Philippines. Dubbed as "A Taste of the Expo," it will showcase five of the best culinary events in the food and beverage industry.

The main competition includes an original Cook concept, which is a monthly feature in the magazine, called "Chefs on the Spot." In this event, teams are not competing against each other but will be judged on how well they use the five given ingredients in their recipes.

McCormick Philippines Inc. launches "Spicescapes," the first spice artwork competition in the country. Participating teams comprised of Culinary Arts and HRM students vie for cash and other prizes for the best two-dimensional artworks using spices and herbs as media.

For those who believe that their rum cake recipe is the best in the world, "Best Rum Cake" is the event to prove it.

"Cooking with San Miguel Beer" will challenge flavor experts to use San Miguel Beer in new and reinvented dishes.

Since *adobo* is a national culinary dish, "Adobo Convention" will be a gathering of the best *adobos* in town using Silver Swan Soy Sauce Vinegar.

Winners will take home as much as P50,000 for the first prize in "Chefs on the Spot," kitchen appliances and lots of gift bags.

"A Taste of the Expo" is in line with the World Food & Trade Expo 2001, which will run from Aug. 3-5, at the World Trade Center, CCP Complex. Call 819-1222 or 812-0023.

CCA students make their mark in the culinary world

THE CENTER for Culinary Arts (CCA) Manila has tasted the sweetness of success through the accomplishment of its students.

In the Tesda Skills Olympics for the National Capital Region, CCA student Ramon Abalos, who competed against five other schools in the event, brought the gold.

In the annual Chefs on Parade competition, which showcases the talents, skills and the splendor of the local culinary world, CCA has reaped awards both for form and substance.

In the 2000 Chefs on Parade, CCA students Jehan Fernandez, Lorraine Dytian and Sonia Inducil combined skills to produce three individual fondant cakes in one setting titled "Isa Bella" or One Beauty. Their work so impressed the jurors who awarded them a perfect score and the gold with honor for the On-the-Spot Cake Decorating competition.

A buffet combination of six different Filipino delicacies in an elaborate and nationalistic spirit was presented by Kim Lori Ngo and Mary Grace Tan in the Filipino Dessert Display competition. Their display of Pichi-pichi, Ube Halaya and Macapuno, Yema, Turon and Maja Blanca won them the silver.

Given the theme "Millennium," a team of CCA students, namely Chinky Castro, TJ Montalbo, Kiko Rustia, Mariel de Guzman and Desiree Lim had to set up a table with the necessary menu folder and centerpiece under time pressure. Their creativity, originality and practicality brought them the silver.

"Chikka" is how the world and the Philippines talk

As you're reading this, friends and relatives abroad are likely on-line. Even more likely, your mobile phone is on right now, in your pocket or on the table with your coffee. In fact, you never leave home without it.

High mobile phone penetration making up for low PC and Internet penetration forms part of the circumstances for the launch of Chikka Txt Messenger. Other elements are an SMS (short message service) explosion that has made texting a way of life in the Philippines and, on the other side of the world, the rise of popular Instant Messengers (IMs) used by millions of PC users as a real-time communications medium.

Chikka is a mobile version of these IMs, thus, the name Chikka Txt Messenger, implying a "marriage" between instant messaging and its counterpart in the GSM world, SMS or texting.

Chikka Txt Messenger offers 2-way, real-time communications between PCs and mobile phones. Real-time also means users are able to detect the presence or availability of "buddies" for sending and receiving messages. Chikka enables this "presence detection," an IM feature, even on mobile phones!

Chikka Txt Messenger works either on an on-line PC or on a mobile phone with a carrier supported by Chikka. One doesn't need a new phone or a new SIM card.

A single text message from your mobile to your GSM operator walks you through a simple registration process. In no time, you are already inviting/adding friends to your "buddy" list, and sending/receiving cool text messages from PC buddies anywhere in the world! PC users can download Chikka as freeware from www.chikka.com and register on-line. They can type up to 160-character messages, send these free to buddies on the move who then, as they say around here, "txt bak."

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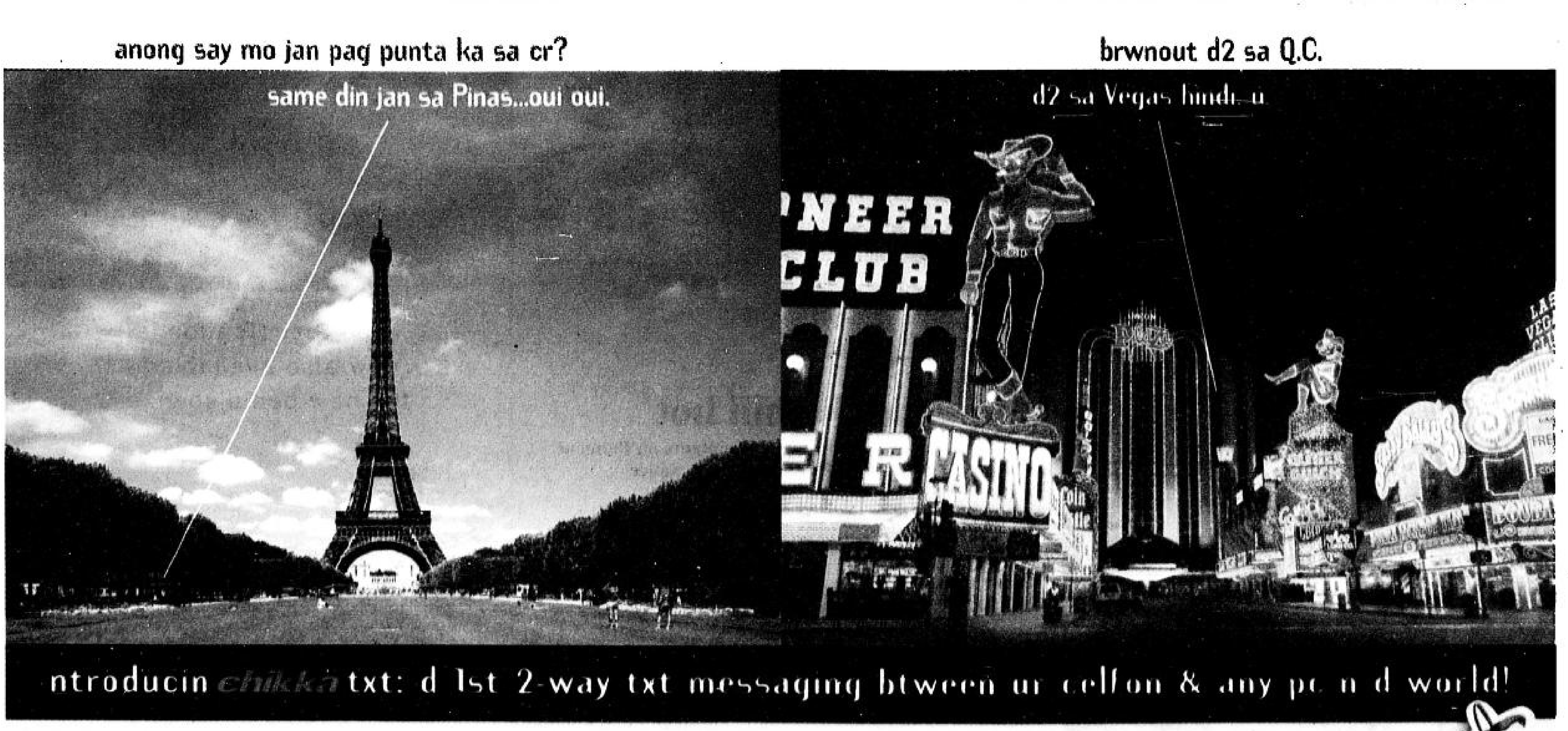
"Chikka Txt Messenger is also a response to the clamor of overseas communities who are asking "How do I text somebody in the Philippines through my PC?" This was a very frequent question in chat rooms and message boards we've visited,"said Dennis Mendiola, Chikka Holdings Ltd.'s CEO. "Chikka," the Filipino slang for "small talk," was the chosen name for this global service. "Small talk" is also the nature of many of the text messages exchanged daily in this SMS-crazy country – the launch pad for Chikka Txt Messenger.

Chikka Holdings Limited, Chikka's developer, was incorporated as a British Virgin Islands company to showcase its international character and exploit its global potential. Its wholly-owned subsidiary, Chikka Pte. Ltd., a Singapore-registered company, holds title to Chikka Holdings Ltd's intellectual property assets, including all international and national patents, brand names, trademarks and servicemarks. To facilitate Chikka's rollout to GSM carriers worldwide, Chikka Holdings Limited is in the process of incorporating operating entities in Asia, the U.S. and Europe to be known respectively as Chikka Asia, Inc., Chikka US, Inc. and Chikka Europe Limited.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